

CROSSROADS
OF THE ALLEGHENY VALLEY

11TH Edition 2025

TARENTUM MAGAZINE

FEATURING:
K9 KILO REPORTS
FOR DUTY

Surviving the
Great Depression in
Tarentum



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Water Plant:ext 202
Public Works:ext 203
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Scott Dadowski President Ward: 2nd
sdadowski@tarentumboro.com

Lou Ann Homa Vice President Ward: 1st
lhoma@tarentumboro.com

Susan Clark Council At Large
sclark@tarentumboro.com

Ray Kerr Ward: 1st
rkerr@tarentumboro.com

Kevin Bertocki Ward: 2nd
kbertocki@tarentumboro.com

Brian Nolan Ward: 3rd
bnolan@tarentumboro.com

Maggie Smith Ward: 3rd
msmith@tarentumboro.com

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Managed & Edited by
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Tarentum Recreation Board

318 Second Ave. Tarentum, PA
tarentummagazine@gmail.com
Tarentum Recreation Board
724-448-1470

ADVERTISING POLICY

Tarentum Borough Magazine was created for the Tarentum Borough and the Crossroads of the Allegheny Valley. The Tarentum Recreation Board and Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertising that goes against our standards. Advertisement is meant for all businesses, fundraising and etc. not for political or religious issues.

Our magazine is distributed but not limited to: all advertisers in this magazine. Thank you to all the advertisers and readers that support the Tarentum Magazine - Crossroads of the Allegheny Valley

MISSION

Tarentum Borough Magazine was created for Tarentum Borough residents and surrounding communities to enjoy and engage in the good works and pleasures of others. Tarentum Borough Magazine is available online and in print. The magazine promotes community values that make Tarentum Borough an asset to all.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

Tarentum Recreation Board Events

OCTOBER 18 - Boo Festival

— 1-4pm Tarentum Riverview Memorial Park

OCTOBER 23 - Business Crawl — 4-8pm Corbet & 5th

NOVEMBER 22 -Tarentum/Brackenridge Christmas Parade

— 12pm Line Up/ 1pm Start

Thank you for all your support! See you at next year's concert series.

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*For more info visit facebook.com/TarentumRecreationBoard/
or contact Carrie Fox at 724-448-1470*



Other Tarentum Events

TARENTUM FARMERS MARKET - June 11- Oct 8 - Wednesdays 9 AM-1 PM - Corner Of Lock And 10th.

TARENTUM NIGHT MARKET - Second Thursday Of Each Month - May Thru October - 5 PM-8 PM

TARENTUM CROSSROADS THEN & NOW



Above: photo by Javon Thorpe

Remembering Mark Anuszek

Tarentum Public Works Director

For 35 years, Mark showed leadership, hard work and his deep commitment to Tarentum Borough. He was not just a dedicated worker he was a friend and a mentor to many.

His impact on Tarentum borough will last a lifetime.

Please remember Mark's family and friends in your thoughts and prayers.





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Oakmont, PA 15139
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F: 412-828-3393

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Tarentum's Newest Officer Reports for Duty **MEET K9 KILO**

The Tarentum Borough Police Department has officially welcomed a new member to the force, and he walks on four legs.

K9 KILO, a highly trained, dual-purpose police dog, has joined the ranks as part of Tarentum's newly established K9 Unit. His handler, Officer Jeremy Belusar, brings years of experience and a deep commitment to community policing, making them an ideal team to lead this exciting new chapter in public safety for the Borough.

Kilo, a German Shepherd, is trained in narcotics detection and patrol functions. That means he's equipped to assist with drug interdiction, suspect tracking, building searches, article recovery, and officer protection. He's not just a powerful law enforcement tool; he's also a symbol of the Borough's ongoing investment in proactive and modern policing strategies.

Officer Belusar and K9 Kilo completed a rigorous training program together, forging a strong bond built on trust, discipline, and constant communication. "He's more than a partner, he's family," said Belusar. "We spend every day together, training, patrolling, and making sure we're ready to respond to any call where we're needed."

The addition of the K9 Unit was made possible through a combination of grant funding and generous donations from residents and local businesses. The unit's specialized K9

vehicle, equipped with a climate-controlled compartment and emergency alert system, ensures Kilo's safety and readiness during patrol.

Mayor Bob Lang praised the unit's formation as "a great step forward for public safety in our community," while Chief Bill Vakulick emphasized its impact: "This is a game-changer for our department. K9 Kilo adds a level of capability that enhances officer safety, improves search response, and helps us stay ahead in the fight against illegal drugs."

Kilo has already begun regular patrols and training exercises across the Borough, and residents may spot him at community events, where he'll also serve as a bridge between officers and the public.

Tarentum Borough is proud to introduce K9 Kilo and Officer Jeremy Belusar to the community. We thank all who supported the launch of this program and look forward to seeing the K9 Unit in action for years to come.





congrats!

2025

HIGHLANDS HIGH SCHOOL GRADS

Adam Michael Abbey
Mara Elizabeth Adams
Thomas Adams
Trenton Devon Anckle
Carter Nicholas Anderson
Ashlynn Jade Anzaldi
Burton Joseph Babinsack
William Baillie
Caden Bair
Salvatore Michael Barbarino
Cayla Calyce Barker
Paitin Diya Barker
Chelsey Alivia Lynn Bell
Lucas William Bernstein
Emma Paige Black
Willie James Blair
Noah Blythe
Makenzie Bouch
Callie Jo Bradfield
Corey Andrew Brzezinski
Aiden Burford
Bailey Lynne Burkholder
Zackery W. Callen
Piper A. Calligan
Kierstin Viola Cambal
Gabrielle Kathleen Anne
Campana-Chambers
Adrianna Jean Carlisle
April Lucille Carlisle
Malaya Lady Cash
Christopher Cekada
Jordan Cheran
Darius Raymond Cherry
Gabrielle Grace Collins
Bradley Allen Cowfer
Alyssa Jacqueline Cribbs

Shane Allen Crusan
Santino Charles Curti
Caitlin Victoria Rose
Danielson
Benjamin William Deluisio
Eva Rose Demeno
Alyssa Dennis
William Daniel Devine
Izabella Dickson
Alexa Dietz
Alex Thomas-Lynn Dixon
Kyle Reese Dollman
Trenton Alan Durci
Ny'ona Jizalee-Lee Dyer
Aidan Eckman
Madeline Alfa Eddy
Dasean Tracy Ellis
Caleb Joseph Flatt
Mason C. Flatt
Michaela Fox
Zoey Lynn Freshwater
Lena-Marie Hannah Gamble
Jordan Gangloff
Makenzie Nicole George
Jhaden Gilbert
Daniel Albert Gohn
Madison A. Gorney
Cora Elaine Graczyk
Trevor Emerson Jeremiah
Grant
Emma Leigh Gravatt
Olivia Jayne Gravatt
Madison Renae Haines
Taysia Angel Lee Harris
Olivia Hayden
Audrey Rashelle Heap

Deanna May Hoover
Cody Householder
Eleana Mae Howard
Kaelynn Rae Hudson
Ariona Marie Hunter
Zachery Ryan Jackson
Montrell Johnson
Faithann Rae Jordan
Kalia Shateima Kamon
Alexis Faith Karns
Matthew Richard Karolkoski
Noah Tyler Kelley
Cruz Kelly
Julian Blake Kemp
Madison Kijowski
Jacob M. King
Julia King
Kristian N. Kocon
Blaine Lewis-Lee Koeser
Caden Alexander Kowalski
Walter Andrew Beau
Krasinsky
Alex Joseph Lanemccants
Trinity Grace Lang
Toby Thomas Lash
Danielle E. Laska
Kayleb Richard Leas
Mikayla Nicole Lecocq
Anthony Frank Ledonne
Elliott Murphy Lentz
Essi Eeva Matilda Leppanen
Braden A. Litwicki
Emma Elizabeth Loughner
Deondre Christian Lucas
Deontae Charles Lucas
Menage Lucas

Olivia Jade Lucjak
Andy Luu
Evan Walker Mann
Samantha Lynne Markey
Brennan Anthony Marra
Olyvia Rose Martinka
Riley Elizabeth McCartney
Noel Louise McGee
Carson John McGraw
Landen K. McKay
Nathan Ambrose McLaughlin
Jayden Marie McSherry
Bailey Megats
Thomas James Mellon
Jacob Anthony Millen
Agastya Narang
James Michael Naviglia
Olivia Blair Negley
James W. Nix
Braiden Lemoyne Ott
Makenna Parise
Erica V. Patterson
Braedon Blase Paz
Aidan Pfaff
Ryan Pfaff
Saige Miriam Phillips
Mason J. Powell
Adison Jo Prazenica
Koooper Price
Trinity Lynn Reynolds
Julia Rittman
Rayna Cheryl Robinson
Maelyn Lee Rose
Sage Mccloud Rowan
Trisanyah Annastaja
Sappleton
Carrah Scardina

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Olivia Marie Schrag
Aaron Schriver
Sean Michael Patrick
Selinger
Ali Shareef
Arianna Natalia Sharer
Keller William Singleton
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Micah Snyder
Jordyn Marie Sobotka
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Trystan Nathaniel Tarr
Erris Teal
Riley Xander Therrien
Alexus Nicole Thompson
Jacob Z. Thorpe
Kyren Malik Veasley
Vincent Rocco Viglione
Hoang Thanh Vo
Hoang Xuan Vo
Abigail Vulgris
Elliot Ryan Vunora
Seth Thompson Wagner
Jaxon Walker
Marlie Mae Walters
Lily Nicole Washington
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*Get your game card stickered and free sampling in each business
Enter for prizes*

SAVE THE DATE

2025

Tarentum – Brackenridge Christmas Parade

Saturday November 22, 2025

1:00 pm

**Starts on Fifth Ave Tarentum, Right on Corbet, Left onto First Ave
Continues into Brackenridge, Left on Morgan ending at McIntire Way**

Come One & All - Join the Fun!
“Win A Prize For The Best Float”



Contact Carrie @ 724-448-1470

carrierox170@gmail.com



MacKay's Market

by Carrie Fox

photos by Hugh Fox and Linda Gromley

MacKay (Mackie) is a family name that Linda Gromley is very proud of. "I came from a hardworking family. It's the American dream to be opening my own business," says Linda. She has worked in the food business all her adult life and is thrilled to be opening a market that will serve her community.

Linda's vision for her store is to offer fresh produce, bread and other bakery goodies along with dairy products and a selection of non-perishable grocery items.

She plans to offer deli meats and cheeses and made-to-order sandwiches, homemade soups and salads to take out. She also hopes to expand her fresh-baked line to home-style cookies, cakes, and pies.



MacKay's Market at 629 Sixth Avenue in Tarentum, has been a work-in-progress for a year now as Linda has been bringing the space up to code and adding special touches with repurposed vintage items, shelving and wood trim from churches that have been closed. Inside and out, the market will have a fresh, new look. Stop in to see what Linda has to offer. Welcome to Tarentum.



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- ✓ Reports go directly to our staff.
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724-224-1100 Office
724-224-1123 Fax
www.akhopecenter.org

What is domestic violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of intentional abusive behavior used to gain power and control over a family member, current or former intimate partner or dating partner.



**Anyone can be a victim of
domestic violence.**

HOPE offers supportive services, opportunities for healing, and community education to assist victims, and end violence and abuse.



As such, HOPE provides *free and confidential* services to survivors of domestic violence, their families and significant others.

In addition to its comprehensive array of intervention services, HOPE also provides primary prevention activities and community awareness and education events in the communities of the Alle-Kiski Valley in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Incorporated in 1979, and recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, HOPE touches the lives of nearly 20,000 individuals each year - over 4,000 of them - direct victims of domestic violence.

*Short-term help —
Long-term HOPE...*

Our Services...

- 24-hour Crisis Hotline - 724-224-1266
- Emergency Shelter and Supportive Services
- SAF-T (Sheltering Animals and Families Together) Program
- Rapid Rehousing
- Attorney - CLR Project
- Legal Advocacy in Allegheny and Westmoreland Courts
- Medical Advocacy and Early Outreach
- Information and Referral Services
- Primary Prevention Programs in Schools
- Community Awareness and Education Programs for Community and Civic Groups
- Volunteer Training and Service Opportunities

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- Volunteer Training and Service Opportunities



Give HOPE

- Be **VIOLENCE-FREE** in your home and community.
- Support survivors you know; provide information and **“be there”**.
- Become an **advocate** against domestic violence.
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Allegheny Valley Association of Churches	724-226-0606
Center for Victims.....	1-866-644-2882
Childline.....	1-800-932-0313
Crisis Center North.....	412-364-5556
District Attorneys Office.....	412-350-4400
Wesley Family Services.....	1-888-222-4200
Neighborhood Legal Services.....	412-255-6700
Night Court.....	412-350-3240
Parental Stress Center (Sup. Visitation).....	412-361-4800
PFA Office	412-350-4441
Pittsburgh Action Against Rape (PAAR).....	1-866-363-7273
Women's Center & Shelter	412-687-8005
The Men's Group..(Batterers intervention)...	412-687-8017 Ext. 3

Other Numbers

Westmoreland County

Blackburn Center	1-888-832-2272
Catholic Charities (Anger Management).....	1-866-409-6455
Childline	1-800-932-0313
Children's Bureau	724-830-3300
PFA Office	724-853-2207
Department of Public Welfare	724-832-5200
Laurel Legal Services.....	1-800-253- 9558
Victim Witness.....	724-830-3272
Westmoreland Co. Housing Authority.....	724-832-7248
Westmoreland Courthouse	724-830-3000

Area Agency on Aging ..	1-800-344- 4319
HAVIN - Armstrong Co.	1-800-841- 8881
VOICE - Butler Co.	1-800-400-8551
National Domestic Violence Hotline.....	1-800-799-7233
United Way Help Line	211

Healing Trauma
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A “GHOST OF AN IDEA”

BY ROBERT CAMERON MALCOLM IV

As I am a retired Presbyterian Minister, having served as Pastor of the Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church for 30 years, you may wonder what a member of the clergy is doing writing about ghosts. It happens that ghosts, or something like them, do show up in stories in the Holy Bible, just as they did in my childhood during the holiday season which, in those days, lasted from Halloween through Epiphany.

Today, scary ghost stories belong more to the autumnal season and Halloween than the happy holiday season of Christmas. But originally, scary ghost stories were a common feature of a Victorian Christmas. As a child, I was enchanted with Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol,” which I first experienced through the 1962 television cartoon version, “Mr. Magoo’s Christmas Carol,” as well as the 1951 Alastair Sims’ movie depiction of “A Christmas Carol.”

During my childhood, our family would gather each year around the TV to enjoy these presentations. In time, I read Dickens’ story of Ebenezer Scrooge. And I would read it again each new holiday season.

I have also collected every DVD of the tale that has been made available on this format. It was always my hope and dream that someone would write and publish a Christmas ghost story like that of Dickens’ 1843 work. In fact, Dickens wrote many Christmas ghost stories. He would spin them out each year during Advent and Christmastide for an eager public to enjoy. But I have never encountered another ghost story by Dickens or anyone else, similar in style and meaning to “A Christmas Carol.”

Following retirement in 2017 as the pastor of Natrona Heights Presbyterian Church, I had

already started my writing career. While sitting in David Freehling’s Service Station along Freeport Road in December 2019, a ghost of an idea passed through my mind.

Years earlier, our church had experienced what seemed to be a haunting by a little girl. Numerous people had seen the entity appear and disappear repeatedly, including me. I first came upon her one night while inspecting the church building before locking up and going home. There she stood outside the fellowship hall wearing a grin. With long flowing dishwater blonde hair and wearing a blue dress straight out of yesteryear, she had her eyes fixated on me. More curious than frightened, I stood staring at her while wondering who this child might be and why she had made a sudden appearance in the church at this hour of the night. I spoke not a word. Neither did she. I quickly noted her characteristics which included being solid and not translucent. After a few seconds, she turned and walked into the female restroom while still smiling at me. It appeared to me that she was beckoning me to follow her. I raced down the hall and entered the water closet. It was empty. She had completely vanished!

I thought that the accounts of her appearances would make a good story line around which I could develop a novella similar in style to Dickens’ Christmas Carol. Immediately, my imagination took off as I began to develop a rough outline, charted character development, and made the initial jottings of dialogue. The novella was fleshed out in the autumn of 2020. Teresa Emeloff, an art instructor from Highlands High School, agreed to illustrate the book. Once finished, Word Association Publishers (Tom and Francine Costello) of Fifth Avenue in Tarentum published and released the book in the fall of 2021.

The book details the life and demise of Anglican rector Rasmus Gilbert Feynman who meets a



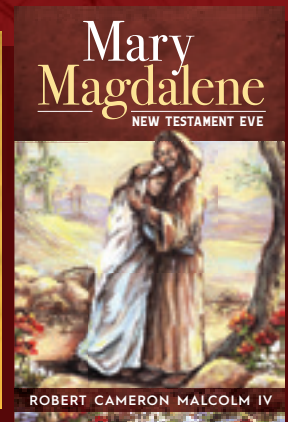
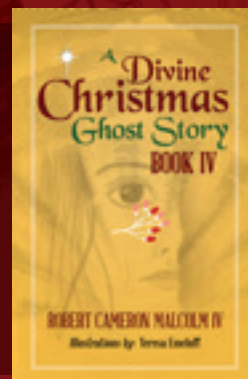
tragic end due to the frightening machinations of an evil entity. Upon entering Heaven, the good rector is dispatched back to Earth in a ghostly form to deal with the untoward spirit and the discouraging circumstances at his former parish following a global pandemic.

Since the release of *A Divine Christmas Ghost Story: Book I*, I have managed to write six more tales in this series and have been releasing them each autumn since 2021. All the books are set in the general area of the Allegheny Valley with Tarentum, Natrona Heights, Brackenridge, and Freeport being among the locations featured in these stories. Ghost Book #5 will be

released this fall. Ghost books #6 and #7 will be released in 2026 and 2027, respectively. Each book deals with matters of sorrow and hope, terror and triumph, redemption and grace. The stories are full of romance intermixed with humor. Like Dickens, the stories also deal with the human spirit and the divine/human relationship. The books in this series are easy to read and quite good for a cold and snowy winter's night in front of the fireplace.

As Dickens penned in his preface to *A Christmas Carol*, "I have endeavoured, in this ghostly little book, to raise the Ghost of an Idea, which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the season, or with me. May it haunt their houses pleasantly and no one wish to lay it."

Cam Malcolm has to date finished eleven books with a book entitled, "A Haunting on Broadview Boulevard and Other Ghost Stories of Southwestern Pennsylvania" currently being written. His books may be obtained directly from Robert "Cam" Malcolm (rc4malcolm@comcast.net) or through Word Association Publishers in Tarentum.



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS SINCE THE TARENTUM HIGH FOOTBALL TEAM DID THE IMPROBABLE

By GEORGE GUIDO

This fall marks the 100th anniversary of Tarentum High School's uniquely successful football team. The 1925 squad not only compiled an undefeated season – but the team also was unscored upon. Tarentum went 6-0-3 with three scoreless ties punctuating the season.

Prior to the 1925 season, Tarentum had experienced three consecutive losing seasons, and a coaching change was made. Tarentum brought in former star athlete Joe Bartell to replace Norman Jacobs.

Bartell had lettered in four sports for Tarentum, excelling in football, basketball, track and tennis. Going undefeated and unscored upon wasn't new to Bartell. His 1924 team at Parsons (WV) High School did the same thing.

Tarentum won despite not having a nickname. The Redcats moniker would come later. Newspaper articles referred to the "Red and Black" or the "Tarentumites."

Also, Tarentum won despite not having a home field. The team played its home games at Birdville Field in Natrona Heights – just about where the Citizens Hose headquarters is today.

Tarentum shared the field with Har-Brack High School, which had come into existence a year earlier. There were no Friday Night Lights either. Games were played on Friday or Saturday afternoons.

Night football wouldn't come to the Alle-Kiski Valley until Parnassus rented a set of lights in 1930. In those days, the regular season didn't start until late September.

THE SEASON PLAYS OUT

Bartell had about 48 players board the bus on Aug. 30 to Camp Windsor near Slippery Rock, a facility affiliated with the YMCA. The players practiced without hometown distractions until Sept. 7, a day before school started.

Bartell made several position changes, most notably moving George Nease from the backfield to an end. Paul Miles, from the Russellton section of West Deer, was Tarentum's fullback.

Since West Deer didn't have a high school at the time, players without a high school located within its municipal borders could pay tuition toward the high school of their choice. That practice continued until state Act 561 of 1961 was created and defined where students would attend schools.

Tarentum had a tune-up game on Sept. 18 against an alumni team, losing 12-6. At that time, the townsfolk were told "not to expect much" from the team. But the players had other ideas.

Tarentum opened the season Sept. 25 with a convincing, 20-0 home victory over Arnold. Miles got the scoring underway and Robert Fager and Bennett Crooks later added touchdowns.



A 7-0 victory over Freeport followed and the Red & Black added a 6-0 triumph over Parnassus behind a Richard Goetz touchdown to go 3-0. Tarentum headed for New Kensington's Seventh Street Grounds for the season's first road game and played Ken High to a scoreless tie. The following week back home, lineman Benny Beal blocked a punt near the Butler goal line and Nease pounced on the ball for the game's only score.

The following week on a muddy McKeesport field, another 0-0 stalemate took place. Next on the schedule was a trip to Kittanning where Tarentum dressed at the high school about a mile away. A truck was supposed to transport Tarentum to Gilpin Field, but the vehicle never showed up. That forced the team to walk to the field in full uniform.

The shutout streak was nearly broken when a Kittanning pass to the end zone on fourth down failed. Tarentum went for the win moments later, but an Arthur Bartell pass to Robert Rooker was batted away, and Tarentum had to settle for another scoreless tie, though it held Kittanning to just three first downs.

The team got back on the winning track a week later with a 13-0 victory propelled by the Tarentum defense that yielded a lone first down.

THE SEASON'S FINALE

That set up a showdown on the final week of the season against Har-Brack. The first game between the two schools the previous season resulted in a 6-0 Har-Brack victory.

The buildup to the game was downright bitter. Principals W.A. Swick of Tarentum and Prof. O.T. Balantine of Har-Brack pleaded with fans to cool it.

But a major fight between students from both schools took place in downtown Tarentum two nights before the game. A 15-year-old boy had the left side of his face disfigured, according to the Valley Daily News. Pop bottles and clubs were utilized until police from three municipalities quelled the outbreak.

When game day finally arrived, 5,000 fans watched a 2-yard run by Miles provide the game's only score. As Miles crossed the goal line, a temporary set of bleachers used by excited Tarentum fans collapsed, sending three females

to Allegheny Valley Hospital for lengthy stays and injuring 20 others.

A blocked Har-Brack punt recovered by Nease at the Har-Brack 2 preserved the victory and the undefeated season.

With the three ties on the Tarentum schedule, it meant the team was ineligible for WPIAL title consideration and Washington would win the championship with a 26-0 victory over Wilkensburg.

Joe Bartell would stay at Tarentum until 1931 before going on to West Liberty State where he compiled a 121-55 record over 21 seasons. He was inducted into the Alle-Kiski Valley Sports Hall of Fame in 1972.

Nease went on to Carnegie Tech (now Carnegie-Mellon) and lettered in three sports. He would return to Tarentum and coach football, basketball and tennis for 28 years. Nease was inducted into the A-K Hall of Fame in 1986.

George Guido is a retired journalist living in Lower Burrell. He covered local sports for 50 seasons (1973-2022) and has written three local history books. A-K Valley Sports History. New Kensington: The Photographic History and Neighborhoods of the Alle-Kiski Valley.

1925 TARENTUM WAS TERRIFIC

Sept. 25 Tarentum 20 Arnold 0
Oct. 2 Tarentum 7 Freeport 0
Oct. 10 Tarentum 6 Parnassus 0
Oct. 17 Tarentum 0 Ken High 0
Oct. 24 Tarentum 6 Butler 0
Oct. 30 Tarentum 0 McKeesport 0
Nov. 7 Tarentum 0 Kittanning 0
Nov. 13 Tarentum 13 Aspinwall 0
Nov. 21 Tarentum 6 Har-Brack 0

STARTING LINEUP

Left end.....George Nease SR
Left tackle.....Fred Shearer JR
Left guard.....Francis McCoy SR
Center.....Ben Beal JR
Right guard.....Kenneth Campbell SO
Right tackle.....Clyde Adamson SR
Right end.....Robert Rooker JR
Quarterback.....Arthur Bartell SR
Left halfback.....Bennett Crooks JR
Right halfback.....Robert Fager SR
Fullback.....Paul Miles JR



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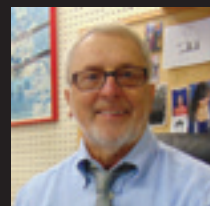
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CREATIVE JUICES FLOWING IN TARENTUM AS XYZ CUSTOM INC. BECOMES A NATIONALLY RESPECTED BRAND

By Carrie Fox

photos by Hugh Fox



XYZ CUSTOM INC. has repurposed a Tarentum landmark building to create immersive environments that teach, empower and illuminate.

In 2024, the company moved from Pittsburgh's North Side to 344 W Sixth Avenue, Tarentum, the former home of United Bronze, commonly referred to by residents as Shoop Bronze.

The six XYZ designers begin with an idea that is turned into engineered drawings, rendered to specific materials, construction and fabrication. Once approved, their team brings a vision to life with precision craftsmanship to deliver built-to-last solutions that inspire and engage.

Founder Steve Hellberg is more than pleased with his decision to move the company to Tarentum. "It's just perfect," he says. "The building is ideal for XYZ, with new roofing, flooring, and HVAC system, we have truly made a home out of the Shoop Bronze building."



Hellberg is pleased to count as partners prestigious names like AHN, Carnegie Museum, Carnegie Mellon, UPMC Children's, Deep Local, Google, Pittsburgh National Airport, PNC, Pittsburgh History Center, WWII National Museum, and Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall. And he is especially pleased that the work XYZ did for The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh creating engaging, interactive displays, has travelled the country's children's museums.

"These displays become a revenue source for the museums," says Hellberg who is particularly proud of the exhibit XYZ conceived and built, featuring artist and children's book author, Charlie Harper, titled "I Am Wild." "This display is a prime example of what customers are going after," says Hellberg.

From start to finish, XYZ Custom takes great care of their creations. They even provide customized shipping crates to assure safe arrival, making a lasting impression wherever the work travels.

XYZ delivers premium quality and cost-effective one-time fabrication. Tarentum is proud that XYZ planted roots here.

For more information visit xyzcustom.com

SHOOP BRONZE COMPANY

started in 1911 at the rear of West Seventh Ave. Tarentum.

The Shoop Brothers George and Emory found a great need to produce bronze, brass and aluminum products.

1913 a tragedy struck; fire gutted their business. With much support to continue, The Shoop brothers purchased 6 lots on West Sixth Ave. with a small house of ill repute left intact on the right-hand side of the newly expanded building. Thirty days after the fire gutted the first building, Shoop's Embraced a modern foundry with a machine shop, welding and bronzing.

Kim Harris, a great granddaughter of Emory, told an interesting story. The Shoop brothers were playing a betting game of cards when George ran out of funds. He bet half the business to be able to continue playing. He lost. Later, he opened Springdale Café.

Shoop Bronze later became United Bronze of Pittsburgh. Today the building is occupied by XYZ Customs.

Acknowledgement Kim Harris and Cindy Homburg





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SURVIVING THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN TARENTUM:

An Immigrant's Tale

BY CHRIS MAGOC

A QUARTER CENTURY after he wrote it, the memoir written by my father, Stephen Magoc remains a lasting gift to his family about growing up during the Great Depression of the 1930s. But his chronicle is also an important and colorful historical document of life in Tarentum during the Depression and of its Slovak American, immigrant community.

My father's story begins in December, 1925, when, as a four-year-old, Stephen emigrated with his mother, Margaret and younger brother, Tom from Trnove, Czechoslovakia. Arriving at Ellis Island with double pneumonia, Stephen spent two weeks being nursed back to health. "There but for the compassion of the Ellis Island Hospital medical staff, 'we three foreigners,' might never have become Americans," my father wrote."

By the time the Great Depression struck in 1929, the Magocs had moved from Glassmere to East Street in West Tarentum. As was true for millions of Americans during the next decade, the family relied on any and all means in order to survive. One of these was our grandmother taking in boarders, among them, fellow Slovaks, John and Joe Slivon. The two men, who were avid fishermen, paid our dad and his friends one penny for the hard-shell and two cents for the soft-shell crabs they caught in Bull Creek and nearby Silver Lake.

Vegetable gardening was common among immigrant communities. As my dad recalled, Conroy Way, known pejoratively to some who looked



*Margaret Kalincsjak Magoc
with sons Stephen (l) and
Thomas (r), ca. 1923, before
emigrating from Trnove,
(Czecho)Slovakia*

down on the Slovaks, as *Hunky Alley*, had a garden of produce in each yard. Since the Magoc's backyard on East Street was too small for a garden, the family cultivated their garden in vacant lots along Bull Creek that were owned by John Klabnik, who also owned the West Tarentum grocery store the Magocs patronized.

A variety of strategies brought extra nickels into the household. When slow moving *shift-er* trains loaded with scrap steel from Greco's rolled through West Tarentum toward Allegheny Ludlum, Steve Magoc and his buddies would hop on and offload pieces of scrap. They then jumped from the train, gathered the scrap, and cashed it in at Greco's.

My dad describes his father Anthony as "not tight, but very thrifty." Anthony Magoc had arrived in the United States in 1922. "He found a job at Glassmere Castings that paid forty cents an

hour - a position left left vacant when the previous worker had been killed on the job.”

To supplement his meager salary and help feed his growing family, Anthony learned from a fellow Slovak how to make slippers, which his sons then sold around town. Anthony spent many days walking with his boys to the Creighton coal mine, where they picked through the discard pile for burnable, *boney coal* to help keep the family warm.

Our dad, learning from his father, became an expert at salvaging. Without municipal trash pick-up, Tarentum citizens disposed of their rubbish by throwing it into the creek, streams, or local dumps. And young, Steve Magoc “knew all the best dumps” as well as the best peach and apple trees in town.

When the 1936 St. Patrick’s Day flood hit, Steve and friends built a makeshift log raft and ferried people across flooded Seventh Avenue. “People gave us nickels and dimes and even quarters for a ride of about 100 yards.” The post-flood cleanup presented a golden opportunity for my father’s reclamation skills. “I was in my glory gathering spools of thread for my mother and old shoes for my Dad for his slipper making.”

The presence of President Roosevelt’s Works Progress Administration (WPA) in Tarentum offered other opportunities. As WPA workers labored to install a storm sewer, Steve and his friends *borrowed* some WPA boards and tar to build not one, but two boats (the first having been seized by the WPA!). Repeat offenders, the boys then fashioned a sled from *extra* WPA planks, and scrap steel for the runners and steering wheel that Greco offered.

One of our dad’s many *escapades*, as he called them, was when this non-swimmer decided to row his boat across the Allegheny with the river dangerously high. In fact, Bull Creek was so high that he only got the boat through the railroad bridge arch and into the river by lying on his back and propelling the boat with his hands on the roof of the arch.



One of Stephen Magoc’s most treasured relics was this brass Crucifix, which he recovered from the old dump over the hill off Bakerstown Road (courtesy Caroline Magoc)



Anthony Magoc’s final pair of slippers, 1968—made for his 8-year-old grandson (Courtesy Chris Magoc)

Somehow, he managed his way over and back, with ice floes occasionally ramming the boat.

Safer entertainment included rolling tires and hoops in alleyways, cruising on homemade scooters, and playing games like Release-the-Belgium. More mischievously, my dad and his friend, “Peanuts” Gille, often snuck into Tarentum theatres to see the movies. Even after the Harris Theatre had them arrested and fingerprinted, they were back the next night.

Soon Steve Magoc would head off to New Guinea as part of the American effort to turn the tide in the war in the Pacific. Upon returning, he and wife, Frances (Uhric) Magoc purchased an acre of that Klabnik land, where for sixty-six years this proud steelworker cultivated his own garden and one of the finest lawns in town.

Rereading this story was a reminder both of the value of personal memoir to community history, and of the courage, resourcefulness, and contributions of immigrants to American life.



A canoe ferrying residents across the flooded intersection of Lock Street and Fifth Avenue during the 1936 St. Patrick’s Day flood, more luxurious than the one hand-built of logs and planks by Steve Magoc and friends (Allegheny-Kiski Valley Historical Society)

TARENTUM LANDMARKS

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