CROSSREADS OF THE ALLEGHENY VALLEY

ISSUE #9

TARENTUM MAGAZINE





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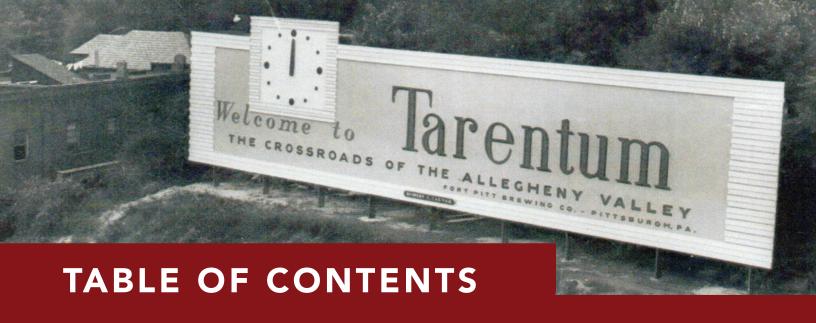
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MISSION

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

AUGUST 15 - Rick Gercak - Three Who Rock

AUGUST 29 - 56 East Band

OCTOBER 26 - Boo Festival - 1-4pm Tarentum Riverview

Memorial Park

NOVEMBER 7 - Senior Bingo - 1pm - Senior Center @ Dalton's Edge

NOVEMBER 23 - Tarentum/Brackenridge Christmas Parade – 12pm Line Up/ 1pm Start

7pm Concerts @ Carl J. Magnetta Jr. Amphitheater Tarentum Riverview Memorial Park – Snack Shack Opens @ 6pm

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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 12 Thru Oct 9 - Wednesdays 9 AM-1 PM - Corner Of Lock And 10th.

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

SUMMIT HOSE CO. FALL FESTIVAL – September 26, 27 & 28 – 6pm-10pm – Tarentum Riverview Memorial Park

9. George D Stuart 12. Grandview

CROSSWORD ANSWERS:
Across 5. Noah Henry 10. The Bull Creek Block House 11. Eureka 13. John Reinehr 14. Crossroads of the Allegheny Valley

Down: 1. Tarentum Honor Roll 2. Henry Marie Barackenridge 3. Masonic Temple 4. Shawnee Indians 6. Methodist 7. Tarentum 8. Hebe



SAINT JOE'S HIGH SCHOOL DRAMA DEPARTMENT DOES IT AGAIN! by Shane Palumbo

The Saint Joseph High School Drama Department continued a winning tradition when they earned two top Gene Kelly Awards for their Spring, 2024 Musical, "Tarzan the Musical!"

The Gene Kelly Awards are for excellence in High School Musical Theater and Saint Joe's took home the award for Best Musical and Best Costume, both in Budget Level 1. Gene Kelly's widow, Patricia Ward Kelly announced the winners.

This is the first year of wins for SJHS Drama Director, Mandi Porter and Producer (and alumna) Natalie Brock. SJHS also won Best Costume Design for the seventh time! St. Joseph High School's costume designer, Barb Kalina, has been with SJHS all twenty-seven years that the Drama Department has participated in the Gene Kelly Awards.

SJHS chose *Tarzan* for this year's musical based on its focus on acceptance and love of all creation regardless of differences.

This year's ceremony, held on May 25th at the Benedum Center in Pittsburgh, was a sold-out event. And, it was reported that the energy of that night, with so many young men and women representing their high schools, had no equivalent. The president of the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera (CLO) noted that this year's high school awards ceremony was the loudest of any held at the Benedum Center, without exception.



SJHS also received 2024 Gene Kelly nominations for Best Dance Ensemble, Best Lighting Design, Best Crew / Technical Execution, and Outstanding Student Artist – Senior Bailey Linza.

As a nominee for best musical, the *Tarzan* cast was invited to perform one number from its musical on the Benedum stage. In addition, Junior Sophia Quattrocci and recent 2024 graduate Vanessa Forster performed in the Gene Kelly finale song on stage.

The SJHS administration and staff is hoping to grow their music program to include chorus and band which will not only support students in the drama department, but those who want to continue the music path they pursued in middle school. Current and future Spartans are very excited!

To complete the cast of Tarzan, SJHS opened auditions to local Catholic grade schools, partnering with Mary Queen of Apostles and Divine Redeemer, both of the Diocese of Greensburg, to play the parts of young Tarzan, young Terk and to perform in the youth ensemble.

Saint Joseph High School (Diocese of Pittsburgh) and Mary Queen of Apostles (MQA, Diocese of Greensburg) have recently partnered, announcing the "Building a Bridge" program, connecting students to a cohesive Pre-K through 12th grade Catholic education in the A-K Valley. "Building a Bridge" will provide parents and guardians with resources that will enable their students to choose SJHS and MQA Schools.

One of the cornerstones of this program is the removal of the financial barriers for parents considering these two schools. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, tuition assistance is available to families. For more information about the "Building a Bridge" program, please visit www.AKValleyCatholicEd.org.

Photos by Kathy Kemp (Kathy's Kreative Portraits)

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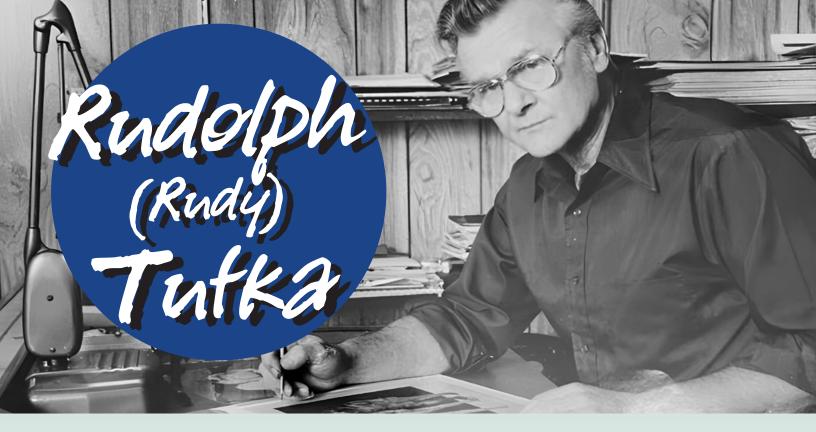
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Back in the day, when people depended on TV directories to help them find what they might enjoy watching during the coming week, readers of the Valley News Dispatch had another reason for anticipating the arrival of their local newspaper's popular TV Directory. It was the inventive, original portraits on the cover of the directory by local artist, Rudy Tutka. During those golden years of television, Tutka illustrated by hand, original portraits of celebrities for the cover of the directory that were so highly-regarded, many readers of the Valley News Dispatch actually collected them.

There were movie stars, stage actors, musicians, singers and comedians who starred in popular weekly television programs and those who would be featured the coming week in live, presentations the networks promoted to as "specials."

Tutka was creating his wonderful portraits well before computers, or computer-generated clip art, or the miracle of Adobe Photoshop. From his desk in a quiet corner at the back of the newsroom, week after week, came this incredible artwork that would grace the cover of the Valley News TV Directory.

The broad smile of John Wayne, the sen-

Barbara Streisand, Jackie Gleason as his character, Ralph Kramden, all hand-created by the marvel that was Rudy Tutka.

Rudy was a hometown boy who grew up in a house at the foot of Tarentum's Ross Street. As a boy, he delivered groceries for his parents



who owned Tutka's Market in Tarentum. When he attended Tarentum High School, he played football as a guard for three years under Coach Ernie Hefferle.

When World War II erupted, Tutka enlisted in the Navy and received his high school diploma in absentia because he was serving in the South Pacific when his class graduated. There he trained as a pharmacists' mate and advanced to the grade of Hospital Apprentice First Class. But after discharge from the Navy, Rudy left his medical training behind to attend the School of Display Arts, now the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

After completing his studies in 1948, Tutka applied at Tarentum's, Valley Daily News, now TribTotal Media. One of his proudest moments was being hired as an apprentice photoengraver and staff artist after being interviewed by publisher

suous eyes of



Charles Hower, editor George Stewart and advertising director George Scheid.

In his early days at the newspaper, Tutka etched drawings on metal plates that were then used to print in the paper. Later, he served as photo engraving manager then as a lithographer. As the process was upgraded, he transitioned to the latest technology, illustratrating advertisements and political cartoons for the Editorial page, which earned the newspaper numerous awards. Later he began creating his legendary, weekly TV directory covers.

His co-workers at the newspaper knew Rudy to be a meticulous artist, a perfectionist, and a great craftsman. Rex Rutkowski, staff writer/reporter and columnist, now retired from the newspaper, says he found Tutka to be a friendly, hard working and a fascinating man and artist.

"He was always patient with me when I asked questions about projects on which I might be working that he was illustrating," Rutkowski recalls. "His work brought new life to my feature stories. As a young reporter, it was inspiring to be around someone with his dedication."

Paul Hess, who was Valley News Editor, now also retired says, "I stopped by Rudy's cubbyhole each week to see what he was working on for the TV tab cover. I must have oohed and awed every time."

One day, Hess recalls, his boss, Publisher, Bob Collins telling him to call Rudy into work from a vacation day he had taken, to create a portrait of a famous person who had passed away suddenly. Hess believes it was John Wayne and, of course, Rudy willingly gave up a vacation day to answer the call of duty.

As dedicated as he was to his job, Rudy was first and foremost, a family man. He and his wife Babe (Sadie) were parents to six children. The Tutka's especially loved spending long, summer days at their camp in Erie. There, Rudy enjoyed watching the sailboats on the lake, often saying, "I wish I could be out there just to sail and watch the sunset or sunrise and enjoy the freedom and relaxation."

But Rudy had a practical side and his daughter, Kim Tutka Lamer, says, "My Dad taught me how to repair many things women should know how to fix, but don't. It helped me through many situations."

Granddaughter, Sadie was only three years old when Rudy passed away but she remembers the strong bond they shared and the fanciful things he taught her like always calling her attention to the daylight moon which, to this day, she still refers to as Pap's moon.

His wife, Babe used to laugh about Rudy's lead foot. "One foot on the gas and one on the brake," Rudy used to say as Babe's fingerprints imbedded themselves on the car dash board."

Proud of his Slovak heritage, he was a member of the Slovak Club and had a lifelong interest in maintaining physical fitness. He particularly excelled at gymnastics and always enjoyed weight lifting.

Though he was a quiet man, Rudy Tutka put great store in always treating everyone with respect. Daughter Kim remembers that he never took anything for granted or expected anything from anyone.

Rudolph (Rudy) Tutka worked forty years at the Valley News before retiring in 1988. With no deadlines to meet, he used his considerable creative talent to draw and create figures from wood. The family has boxes of his works and will treasure them always.

Rudy passed away in 1999 after a lengthy battle with cancer.

"He was always Dad to me but loved by many," says daughter Kim. "He shared his passion with thousands through his artwork. He had a true faith in God and lived his life accordingly."





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I would like to take this opportunity to reach out to the Tarentum businesses and residents. The entire staff of the Tarentum Post Office is dedicated to working together to provide our customers with the most efficient and courteous service possible. Therefore, I ask that you take some time to make sure your mailbox and houses are properly marked. Also, please repair any mail receptacles that may need some needed maintenance. This helps the carriers and prevents mis deliveries.

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The entire staff of the Tarentum Post Office would like to wish the Tarentum businesses and residents a safe and great 2024! We appreciate you and thank you!

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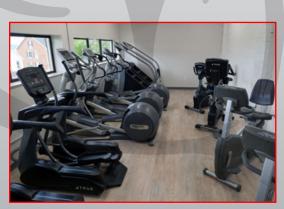
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Stefan Lundberg, a former professional soccer player, is also head trainer at the gym and he wants the public to know that Legends is continuing to offer twenty-four-seven access to an extensive selection of free weights, machines, cardio, and personal and specialized training.

Lundberg says, "We pride ourselves on providing something for everyone, including gym memberships, CrossFit-type classes and elite soccer and baseball training." He is most excited about the completion of their new outdoor workout space, which includes a basketball court and turf area, which sets Legends apart from other fitness centers. In addition to their youth soccer and baseball classes, the facility will continue hosting their popu-



lar birthday parties and other events, utilizing their padded ninja warrior course.

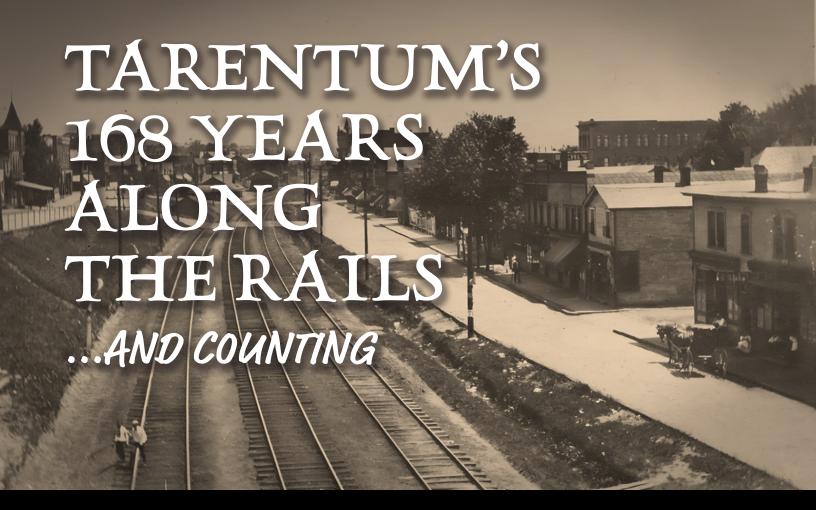
Stefan is quick to point out that this familyrun operation also includes Ethan Clarke and
Owen Anderson who, as first-rate managers
and coaches, head up their day-to-day
operations "GREAT EMPLOYEES
LIKE THESE, ALONG WITH OUR FAMILY
BEING SO HANDS-ON, CREATES A
SPECIAL ATMOSPHERE FOR OUR CLIENTS
AND MEMBERS." And he adds that the
result is that clients and members also quickly
become part of the Legends family.

"I think that they all appreciate the encouraging environment and camaraderie that our facility generates. We are excited to offer Tarentum and the surrounding communities a place where people can better themselves physically and mentally. With over 10 years of experience, we are confident that Legends of Pittsburgh is a great home for anyone wanting to reach their fitness and lifestyle goals."

Stefan invites everyone to stop in to see for themselves what a remarkable place the new Legends is.







The sounds of trains chugging through Tarentum have been echoing through the valley since that fine October day in 1856 when the first train arrived.

On that momentous occasion, crowds of people lined the tracks, cheering when they saw the magnificently adorned engine, decorated in red, white and blue bunting--and even more anxious to catch a glimpse of the dignitaries aboard.

In the early years, passengers wishing to travel to Tarentum had to endure quite an ordeal. For starters, they would board a train that came up the valley on the Lower Burrell side of the river. That train would arrive at Craigdell Station, which was located at the bottom of Craigdell Road, not far from the present sight of Giant Eagle Grocery. This meant Tarentum-bound travelers had to board a ferry to Hairs Island in the middle of the

Allegheny. After disembarking, passengers would trudge to the other side of the island where they boarded a second ferry to complete the river crossing to Tarentum. Eventually the West Penn Railroad began running trains on the Tarentum side of the river and a proper station was built here. But even with that, many who had called the Craigdell Station, *Tarentum Station*, continued the habit and for a while, there was a Tarentum Station on each side of the river.

As more and more rails were laid, growing from twenty-six hundred miles in the 1880s to eleven thousand, five hundred miles by 1920, railroad companies contributed greatly to the growth of our area by efficiently moving people and products from place to place. And so the trains became part of the culture and daily life of the community.

Mary Collins and her husband, Ray have happy memories of packing up their children and a picnic basket and boarding the train for a family outing to Kennywood. The children loved the excitement of going to Kennywood on a train. Barb Magnetta remembers political rallies with dignitaries on the back of a caboose and crowds of people gathering around to hear their speeches. She also recalls the trains pulling in to West Tarentum, being sprayed with water to cut the dust from the coal-fired engines.

Marlene Campbell recalls the little house on the rails where a man sat and lowered the safety gates as the trains went by. Children picked up the coal that fell from the cars and took it home to burn.

Carol Lavery used to wave to the passengers as the trains rolled by while other youngsters scrambled to collect bubble gum that caboose engineers threw from the train.

Through the decades, almost every town in the country had a train station that was a bustling center of activity. But as train travel declined, many rail stations, were torn down to make way for more modern buildings or parking lots.

Tarentum, however, is fortunate to have had its handsome, nineteenth century, train station saved from the wrecking ball and authentically restored and repurposed for fine dining.



Though freight trains still come rumbling through Tarentum, the last passenger train passed through Tarentum in 1964.

There are many local residents who believe the return of a modern version of the passenger train would make trips into Pittsburgh faster and more energy efficient.

What do you think about a future that would include the return of an updated version of the passenger train?

information courtesy of Jean Flemming

sources: triblivecom/local/valleynewsdispatch www.unionprogress.com



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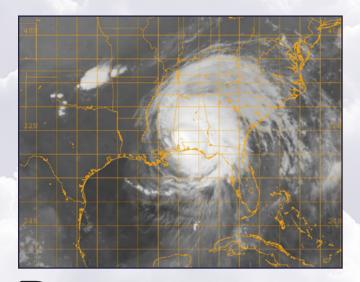


THE MONSTER NAMED IVAN

20 YEARS LATER

BY CARRIE FOX

From the Cape Verde Islands, in the mid-Atlantic Ocean about 300 miles off the west coast of Africa to our little town along the Allegheny, came a monster storm on September 17, 2004, that still lives in our memories twenty years later.



reported 5.95 inches of rain in a 24hr period, Tarentum recorded 7 to 8 inches of rain in the same period. The already-saturated ground caused overflows and the water began to rise at an alarming rate.

Ivan hit Tarentum with brute force and affected our region like no other. Etna, Millvale, Freeport, Fawn Township and Sarver all reported flooding. As people scrambled to reach their loved ones, many roads were closed, evacua-

tions were taking place as residents rushed to escape the swiftly rising waters.

Bull Creek was raging. When the Route 28 Expressway was built, the Davidson Street area became a catch-all for water, as stormwater drains and water run-off drains flow directly into this part of Bull Creek.

When Ivan hit, Davidson Street turned into a river, filling yards and homes with muddy waters. Everyone was in disbelief that the creek would get that high. The Train Bridge, which crosses over Bull Creek, near Nick Chevrolet, was blocked with debris, causing the Davidson Street area to fill up like a bathtub.

The small bridge at Mill Street was under water. Neighbors were on their roofs calling for help. Even though an evacuation order had been put in effect, with only one way in and one way out, people in the neighborhood had nowhere to go.

Tarentum and surrounding area first responders jumped into action providing rescues, lighting, and helping any way they could. Tarentum Police and our local volunteer fire departments were exceptional. A command center was formed on the back deck of a home on Cedar Street. Electric and gas were cut off. Cell phones were not working. Phone lines were overwhelmed. Neighbors could not get in touch with one another. Family members were frantic with worry over loved ones.

Once a rescue mission was in place, mostly by boat, first responders began helping residents up the hillside to the expressway near Bull Creek Road. Many just crawled their way up the hill on foot. Others were basketed up.





Later that evening, fearing what would happen when the Train Bridge released all its captured water, another rescue mission took place to evacuate those still stranded, up the hill-side onto Bakerstown Road. They had to crawl through thick mud, in the dark of night to reach an ambulance that was waiting to provide transportation out of their flooded neighborhood.

Many neighbors watched in horror as their homes filled with water and their belongings floated away. The water destroyed everything in its path, even many cars.

Very few residents had flood insurance. After paying deductibles, homeowners' insurance only covered, vehicles and sewage backup damages. FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) came through and assisted with some help. Local charities, such as Catholic Charities and The Salvation Army were generous, bringing food, clothing and other necessities to the hard hit area.

The smell was awful. Thick mud and mold covered the streets.

Tarentum Borough officials and Tarentum Borough employees came together and led a remarkable clean up effort. They helped remove debris and garbage even though the Tarentum Borough Public Works Garage itself was also damaged by the flood.

Thanks to their hard work, the smelly, wet trash put out at the curb was gone within an hour!

Though it was nothing short of a miracle that no lives were lost, three elderly women did suffer heart attacks after enduring the shock and terror of the flood. Residents lost both treasured heirlooms and everyday essentials. Everyone was in disbelief at the depth of the devastation caused by Ivan.

The Army Corps. Engineers & Allegheny County developed a plan to control the floodwater at the mouth of Bull Creek. The work would cost 1.5 million dollars. The dredging alone, of sediment and debris from Bull Creek between Mill Street and Route 28, cost three hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

As part of the clean-up, there were homes that had to be demolished. Some people rebuilt and refurbished but others did not.

The haunting memories live to this day. When heavy rain is forecasted, everyone has Ivan on their mind. It was a storm no one will ever forget.





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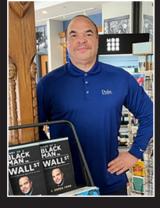
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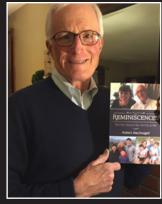
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IF YOU'RE WALKING DOWN CORBET STREET AND HEAR THE SOUNDS OF A LIVE AUDIENCE,

it's likely coming from one of Tarentum's newest businesses, *Poduty.com*, *LLC*—a podcast theater. Yes, a podcast *theater*.

Poduty.com, LLC, is the brainchild of Jeff Revilla, a twenty plus year veteran of digital marketing. Revilla had an idea to merge small, independent podcasts with a live audience. A seven-year dream in the making, Jeff has created a unique space in the Harrison building.

Revilla searched for two years before acquiring the property. When he saw Harrisons, on Fifth Avenue, he knew he'd found the perfect spot and the renovation project commenced. He faced numerous challenges – soundproofing the room, lighting, and audiovisual setups. But after careful and extensive planning, the theater had its grand opening June 13th at the Tarentum Night Market.

At first look, the building is deceiving. From the outside, one would never guess that the former men's wear store could be housing a small theater. When entering the building, guests are greeted to a front counter, complete with a stocked snack bar. The walls have been painted black. Revilla hopes to add local artwork on the currently bare walls in the lobby area. Entering through a black curtain to the main stage area, there



are only three rows of orange chairs – but that ensures any seat in the house is a good one.

There are still some elements of the former clothing store. The original red carpet remains, along with a detailed art print of Harrison and his friends riding in a buggy.

The room has an intimate feel where podcasters and audience members can easily engage with each other. The stage offers a large screen and several microphones – and the set-up is anything but simple, with cameras that can create the upscale effect of a Saturday Night Live skit.

When content creators and podcasters book the venue, they are getting an affordable, package deal. There is no fee for the creators and Revilla takes no ownership of the content created.

THE SET-UP IS
ANYTHING BUT SIMPLE,
WITH CAMERAS THAT
CAN CREATE THE
UPSCALE EFFECT OF
A SATURDAY NIGHT
LIVE SKIT.

There is no charge to rent the space, but creators split the ticket profits with the theater.

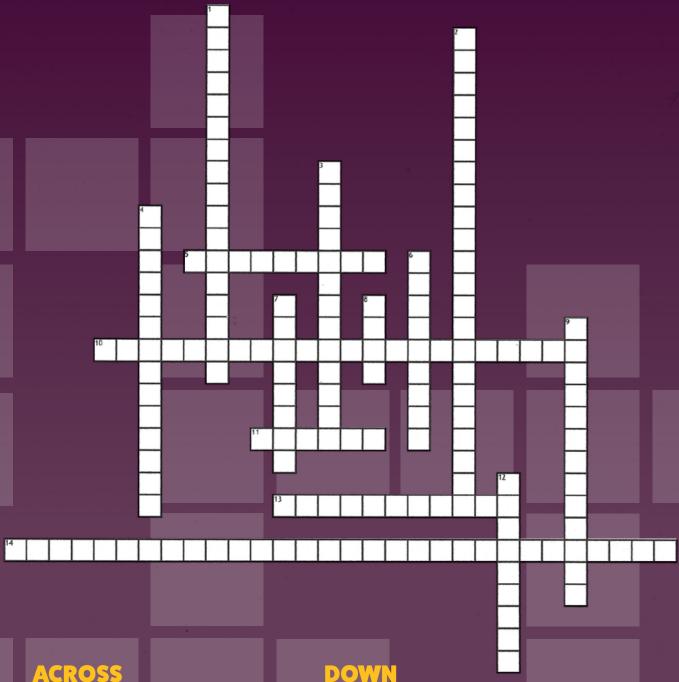
Revilla and his team are looking for creative acts such as spoken-word podcasts in various categories (comedy, news, health, art, science, hobbies, games, and more), multimedia programs and live trivia nights. However, there is no need to be a professional content creator or podcaster to have an event at *Poduty.com*, *LLC*.

Currently, Revilla hosts his live trivia game, *Stuff I Never Knew*, every other Tuesday. He partners with the Pittsburgh created company, Libsyn for distribution of his podcast to major podcast platforms like Spotify, Pandora, Apple, Google and more.

If you have an idea, feel free to pitch it to Revilla. Amateurs and professionals alike are welcome to the Poduty stage. And that could be a really big deal when you consider that Revilla gives his performers their audio file to distribute with whatever podcast host they choose.

Learn more at poduty.com.

TARENTUM NOW & THEN



ACROSS

- 5. Prominent founder of Summit Hose Company
- 10. Monument at the Tarentum Marina
- 11 . Established ambulance service in 1936
- 13. Person in charge of starting **Tarentum Park in 1919**
- 14. Name of Tarentum Magazine.
- * Find the answers on the bottom of Page 2

- 1. Located on the corner of Third Ave & Corbet St in 1943
- 2. Founder of Tarentum
- 3. Only building in Tarentum is used for original purpose.
- 4. Indians that settled in Tarentum
- 6. First Religious group in Tarentum
- 7. Incorporated March 4, 1842
- 8. Tarentum Statue of the Gilded Lady
- 9. Proper name for Tarentum Bridge
- 12. Largest School built in 1915

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2024

Tarentum – Brackenridge Christmas Parade

Saturday November 23, 2024 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"



"Tarentum Remembrance Tree"



\$40.00 / Leaf Leaf Size 1-3/4" X 3-1/2" 23 Characters & Spaces each Line 3 Lines Total





\$125.00 / Rock Rock Size 3"X 5-1/4" 23 Characters & Spaces each Line 3 Lines Total

The Tree is mounted on the street side of the Snack Shack in Tarentum Riverview Memorial Park
Price includes engraving

Mail or Email Your Remembrance Information

Mail – Tarentum Recreation Board - 318 E2nd Ave. Tarentum, Pa 15084

Email – tarentummagazine@gmail.com

Checks can be made out to – Tarentum Recreation Board

For more information phone – 724-448-1470

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