New local production tells story of Akron park

Schneider Park in Akron seems like your typical family-friendly park. What local residents who enjoy the park may not realize, though, is how many bodies—and secrets—are buried beneath their feet. THE FORGOTTEN DEAD, which premieres Sept. 1 on PBS Western Reserve, tells the story in a poignant way.

From the mid-19th to early 20th century, the green space that is now Schneider Park was the cemetery attached to the county poorhouse, which housed elderly and disabled people of that era. To tell this story, a local theater troupe of actors with disabilities reenacts what life would have been like for them back then. THE FORGOTTEN DEAD strives to memorialize those who were marginalized in life, and forgotten in death, by challenging us all to rethink our perceptions of the people all around us living today with disabilities.

The production was created by Josh Gippin of Joshua Tree Productions in collaboration with University of Akron students and Theatre on the Spectrum. Additional air dates can be found at PBSWesternReserve.org. Following the production’s premiere, it will also be available for free viewing on demand on the station’s website.
Educational Services

Professional training converts to online courses

Professional development opportunities for educators converted to online courses, focusing on developing remote teaching and learning skills for the upcoming school year. In June, 135 teachers attended the month-long courses and 55 teachers received graduate credit from Kent State University. Upcoming courses for Fall 2020 include four self-paced online courses.

Educators learn about computer science project

The Ohio Department of Education in collaboration with PBS Western Reserve conducted virtual meetups in July and August that featured our latest multimedia project, Computer Science for Your Classroom: Ohio’s Standards. Educators who have utilized the project’s videos discussed how they are integrating those standards and how best to use the lessons.

New grant to fund early learning

PBS Western Reserve received an early-learning grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and received training on the grant requirements throughout May and June with six virtual training sessions. The grant will feature four training sessions to area family child-care providers on playful learning and how to integrate PBS resources into their early learning programs. The training opportunities will take place in October and November.

Station receives United Way funding

United Way of the Mahoning Valley announced continued funding to PBS Western Reserve for extended workshops supporting our Ohio Ready To Learn initiative for 2021. Thirty workshops will be offered to family child-care providers in the Mahoning Valley beginning virtually in the fall. This will be the third year that the United Way funded the expanded workshop initiative.

Community Outreach

Be a Caring Neighbor community event planned

PBS Western Reserve has received funding from the Fred Rogers Foundation and PNC Bank to conduct a Be a Caring Neighbor event in Summit County. The outdoor event featuring Daniel Tiger will occur in March 2021 and will feature opportunities for Summit County families to receive school supplies and other resources.

Staff News

Jeff Good presents at conference

Jeff Good, chief education technology officer, gave the opening address to the Mahoning County Educational Service Center Administrators Conference in August. More than 200 educators attended the virtual conference.

Fred Barrett completes training

Fred Barrett, emerging media manager, successfully completed HubSpot Academy’s seminar on social media best practices, which focused on social media monitoring, content strategy and engagement.

On Saturday, Aug. 8, our new WNEO antenna was lifted into place in Salem. The crew came in on Thursday from Buffalo with four trucks, two trailers, a fuel tanker and a nine-person crew. They lifted off, removed the old antenna, put the new one up and set back down in about 18 minutes total!