

# Well-Informed

Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation | Community Benefit Report | Summer 2013



## Healthy Community

How do you build a healthy community? Ask the question, and you'll likely get a variety of answers:



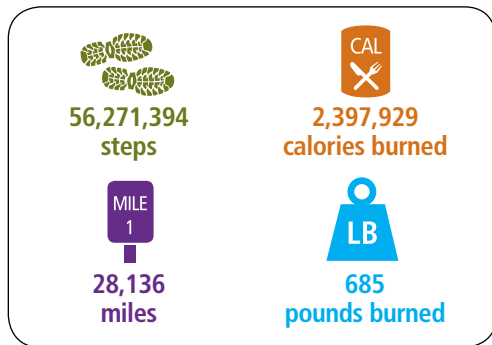
It's obvious that the health of a community depends on a number of factors that are often closely linked. Whether nationwide or community-based in Pottstown, it's our collective responsibility to make sure that these factors don't deter us from achieving a healthy place to live, work and raise our families.

It's in that spirit that we celebrate our neighborhood, just in time for summer.

### Boyertown to Key West Event:

Walking is one of the keys to good health. Need proof? Take a look at the successes achieved at the recent walking event that takes participants from Boyertown to

Key West, Florida. The [Boyertown Area Community Wellness Council \(BCWC\)](#) reports that 108 people took part in the competitive event with cumulative milestones that included:



One of the participants is Joanne Gehman. Her story is relatable to many. In 2008, she joined the BACWC as their treasurer. She reflects, "I always had an interest in healthy living and tried to eat right and exercise. My busy life and love of cooking and baking, however, often got in the way of that goal. I love to eat even more than I love to cook!"



Her goal was to lose between 20 and 30 pounds, and many can attest that it's not an easy feat. While she saw successes, she also battled defeats in trying to lose weight. Over the years, however, she has developed healthy habits through diet and exercise. As she approaches her 50th birthday this summer, she notes that you'd have to go back 20 years to find a time when she felt as good about her shape. Joanne's team placed second in the 2013 Boyertown to Key West journey.

Coming off the Key West adventure, BACWC has planned a host of activities to motivate the community to get fit in area parks. Watch the event page of [MissionHealthyLiving.org](http://MissionHealthyLiving.org) for more details on upcoming activities.

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# a message from our director



Dear Community,

School's officially out for the summer! Bring on those long, lazy days, right? Wrong! Summer is actually one of the most powerful opportunities to keep the brain-body connection active and engaged.

There is a growing body of research on the positive impact of physical activity on the brain. As you exercise, your muscles contract and release chemicals that travel to the brain, stimulating the release of a protein called BDNF (brain-derived neurotrophic factor). As Dr. John Ratey, Harvard psychiatrist and author of *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and Brain*, puts it, BDNF "serves as Miracle-Gro for the brain, fertilizing brain cells to keep them functioning and growing."

Since we are "born movers," to use Dr. Ratey's term, here are a couple ideas to encourage physical activity at home this summer:

- Provide children with a choice of activity, like walking, hiking, swimming, tennis, kayaking or bicycling.
- Make time for family, not only by including children in meal preps, but also by playing a favorite song and having an impromptu kitchen dance party.
- Think of the great outdoors as your own personal science classroom with open spaces ripe for investigation.

Most importantly, is a simple truth all parents know at home, we are the role models! Making physical activity a family commitment is where true sustainability in developing healthy habits lies.

David W. Kraybill, Executive Director

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## Bike Pottstown:

Make it easy. That's a sentiment that many desire when it comes to making healthy decisions. The [Schuylkill River Greenway Association](#) does just that with its [Bike Pottstown](#) program, managed by Tri-County Bicycles. People over 16 years of age can access free bikes in order to enjoy area trails, run errands or go shopping. The organization is often asked if people can borrow bikes to do their shopping in town. The answer? Yes! Bike Pottstown wants their bikes to replace your cars.

The Fuji Sanibel Cruiser is a retro style ride in custom yellow only available through Bike Pottstown. And, yes. The bike is named for the infamous 12,000+ foot Mount Fuji—though most who've taken advantage of the program aren't necessarily conquering mountains that size...yet! To date, the program has been a resounding success with more than 3,000 bikes shared since June 2008. Community interest continues to grow now that Bike Pottstown has 40 bicycles in its fleet.



*The Schuylkill River Greenway Association's popular Pedal and Paddle program is back for its third summer. The event starts with a five mile bike ride to the historic Morlatton Village. After a one hour tour of Berks County's first settlement site, participants take a short bike ride to the Schuylkill River, hop into kayaks and enjoy a guided tour back to River Park in Pottstown. For more information on upcoming events, call 484-945-0200.*

## Sharing Healthy Recipes:

When it comes to fresh fruits and vegetables, nearly no other season can compare to summertime. Local farmers markets, area roadside stands and even grocery stores are teeming with fresh produce, as well as tips for turning out delicious and nutritious meals.

Whether sharing your best advice on healthy grilling techniques or creative ideas for tasty salads, why not consider sending your [recipes](#) to Mission Healthy Living?

In order to make it easier to find and share information on health and wellness for the Pottstown community, Mission Healthy Living was born. Its purpose is to provide quick resources and encourage small steps toward healthy choices through a community approach meant to offer encouragement along your journey.

Send your recipes to Rose Crews so we can share your best ideas with others: [RoseCrews@pottstownfoundation.org](mailto:RoseCrews@pottstownfoundation.org).

## Parks & Recreation:

Rather than retiring to your air conditioned cave for the hot summer months, consider enjoying the numerous parks that call Pottstown home.



If you have a favorite park, send a photo from your most recent trip. We would love to map out favorite outdoor venues around town. Send to [RoseCrews@pottstownfoundation.org](mailto:RoseCrews@pottstownfoundation.org).

[www.pottstownfoundation.org](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org)





## Tennis is a Lifelong Sport

Three local organizations have one thing in common—the love of tennis. The sport of tennis is one of those sports that once it's learned, it can be played at any age. Learning as a young student provides the foundation to continue playing through one's teenage years, adult years and into the senior years as well.



**The Tennis Farm (TTF)** is a youth tennis organization that runs a free four-week "On the Rise" program for elementary-aged students in the Pottstown School District. The camp is offered to students from at-risk or lower socio-economic backgrounds chosen by school faculty as standout students. Participants become true students of the game by learning proper tennis techniques and healthy living, and they develop excellent sportsmanship and life skills. Most importantly though, according to Phyllis Mascioli, Executive Director of TTF:

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**"Our goal is to positively impact the lives of the most deserving students, and turn them into good citizens both on and off the court."**

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**The Greater Pottstown Community Tennis Association (GPTA)** gets students on the tennis court at a young age at the Pottstown Middle School. Students in grades 5-8 participate in an after-school program. Middle School faculty strongly supports the program, as it provides a positive impact on the students' education, life skills and emotional health.

According to Kerriann Herdelin, Director of Operations for GPTA/GPTL, "Our goal is to promote a healthy lifestyle by keeping the kids moving each day while having fun and hitting tennis balls. We hope to grow the sport of tennis in the Pottstown area."



**Amity Township Athletic Club (ATAC)** supports the Daniel Boone School District by providing tennis as a sport to high school students. They sponsor both the girls and boys high school varsity teams. According to Karen LeBlanc, ATAC President, "The club realizes the value of tennis and is therefore partnering with the district by providing free clinics to interested students through the school year, in addition to a summer camp for younger children."

All three of these organizations realize the impact the sport of tennis can have on an individual. In the process of developing a lifelong sport such as tennis, and learning the importance of a healthy "physical" lifestyle, individuals will also learn lifelong social skills that will provide a healthy "emotional" lifestyle as well.





## Hit the Trail in Upper Pottsgrove Township

Sprogels Run Pedestrian Trail is for everyone. Located in [Upper Pottsgrove Township](#), the trail, which begins at Sunset Park, is now ADA compliant and wheelchair accessible. It travels along to the main pond, which is a popular fishing hole and enjoyed by many.

The trail has recently received a facelift which included removal of several old buildings and debris, a major clean-up effort, and distribution of wood chips on the entire trail. Collaborative efforts between township employees, local residents and Comcast employee volunteers allowed this project to become a reality. Additional improvements include bike racks and benches.

According to Jack Layne, Township Manager:

**“The township’s goal is to provide a healthy and safe environment for all residents and surrounding communities. Walking is an excellent source of exercise for all ages, and the trail provides this opportunity for all—from the youngest resident to the growing elderly population.”**

Sprogels Run Pedestrian Trail provides a healthy environment for a brisk walk, a casual jog, healthy run, or a leisurely stroll to get in touch with nature. Whatever your needs, you will have access to resources that will help you maintain a healthy lifestyle in Upper Pottsgrove Township.

## board profile



### Phyllis Harwood, Board Member

Phyllis Harwood begins each day with a simple promise: Every day is an opportunity to think positive—and improve your well-being.

For the past nine years, Harwood has served as an active member of the Foundation’s board, most recently on the Grants, Marketing/ Communications, 10th Anniversary and Impact committees. St. Joseph’s Hospital, Pottstown Hospital-North Division (now Pottstown Memorial Medical Center) and Reading Rehabilitation Hospital benefited from her skills as a registered nurse. Prior to retiring, she served as school nurse for Pottstown and Owen J. Roberts School Districts. Her career dedication to nursing has given her valuable insight when it comes to directing healthy outcomes for all.

“I encourage the community to embrace healthy living by utilizing the resources readily available for everyone, including the [www.pottstownfoundation.org](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org) and [www.missionhealthyliving.org](http://www.missionhealthyliving.org). Using the walking rails, Bike Pottstown, community gardens and parks are some of the other resources for all to enjoy.”

In addition to her work with the Foundation, Harwood assisted with a Life Program for students after school—teaching about nutrition and fitness, initiating a walking program in her elementary schools to get students moving, as well as working with the American Cancer Society during Daffodil Days and Pottstown’s Relay for Life. Also, she played an integral role in the Kids for a Cure program, an addition to the Relay for Life which teaches cancer awareness to children in order to better understand the disease and get into healthy habits as prevention. These are efforts that continue to be well-received today.

[www.pottstownfoundation.org](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org)





# Boyertown Community Works Together

Three generations of a family play a game of disc golf in the park as a way of spending time together during their grandfather's cancer treatment. Physically challenged residents from Chestnut Knoll and St. John's Lutheran Church enjoy the "Saturday Walk in the Park" event with the help of church staff and Boyertown's Rotary and Lions Clubs.

This was all made possible by a "village" of people who came together to create healthy opportunities for Boyertown residents and their families. A walking trail with exercise equipment and a disc golf course were designed and constructed in the [Boyertown Community Park](#) in about seven months, due to the willingness and cooperative efforts of many.

Beginning with bequests from Francis S. Fenstermacher to both the Boyertown Rotary and the Boyertown Lions Club, additional funds were provided by the Foundation, and manpower was contributed by many volunteers.

Collaborative efforts among several organizations and many local volunteers is the reason that Boyertown is now the home of the Fenstermacher Fitness Campus. Residents and their families enjoy the convenience and free access to healthy activities at what is now called a "community treasure."

According to Roger Lehmann, Lions Club member, and Charles Haddad, Rotary Club member, "The key to the success of this project was the effort of a 'village' of people coming together for a common cause and a healthier Boyertown community."





# Pottstown Regional Parks Mini-Grant Program

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee (PMRPC) and the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation (PAHWF), with a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), are working together to promote Parks and Recreation in the Pottstown Region. A mini-grant program with eight grants of up to \$25,000 each will be awarded to municipalities in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region to help fund park improvements that promote recreation.

The Region's eight member municipalities are invited to apply for funding for the planning or development of park improvements. These municipalities include Pottstown Borough, Douglass, New Hanover, West Pottsgrove, North Pottsgrove, and East Pottsgrove in Montgomery County and North Coventry and East Coventry Township in Chester County.

Preference for funding will be given to proposals that add park amenities recommended by the Penn State University (PSU) study, such as adding to existing park facilities and improving previously acquired park land by adding green features, pathways, signage, or other enhancements. Specific PSU recommendations can be found at: <http://www.pottstownfoundation.org/pages/psu-report.htm>.

Applications for the first round of funding will be accepted until September 6, 2013. Project requests up to \$25,000 will be considered. For more information about the Mini-Grant program and to access application materials, please visit the Pottstown Region's website at [PMRPC.PottstownMetroRegion.com](http://PMRPC.PottstownMetroRegion.com).



## "Foundations for Life" Blog with Dr. Laurie Betts

Find inspiration and advice by following Dr. Betts as she discusses family life, exercise, nutrition and more. She will cover topics everyone can relate to, so join in the conversation and share your challenges and your successes.

[Click here](#) to follow Dr. Betts today!

# "Teaching Kids about Nutrition – Fresh & Local" Webisode Series



Local students are learning the importance of good nutrition, eating fresh foods and buying locally.

The Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation has produced an informative webisode series titled "Teaching Kids About Nutrition – Fresh & Local." Tune in to hear three local guests discuss the benefits of teaching kids about nutrition. Discussion provides tips for both parents and educators on how to encourage children to break

away from traditional high-carb snacks by tasting new fruits and vegetables. Many schools are providing opportunities for their students to be involved with preparing and taste-testing healthy snack options in the classrooms and taking the ideas and recipes home to their parents.

### Teaching Kids About Nutrition – Part 1

features Allison Carr, Registered School Nurse from [The Wyndcroft School](#). Ms. Carr creates an interactive atmosphere with the students during "Fresh & Local Fridays". Tune in to hear how she encourages students to try healthier snacks made from fresh ingredients, and that buying locally benefits the community as well.

### Teaching Kids About Nutrition – Part 2

features Yvonne Post, Owner of "Cooking for Real".

Learn how Ms. Post uses humor and creativity to encourage students to try new foods. This webisode provides insightful tips on how parents can involve their kids in the kitchen, and how to empower them to make healthy choices.

### Teaching Kids About Nutrition – Part 3

features Dr. Karlan Senseny, [East Vincent Elementary](#) Kindergarten Teacher, in the Owen J. Roberts School District. Dr. Senseny incorporates "Tasty Tuesdays" in the classroom to encourage her elementary students to sample new foods as healthy snacks and break away from the traditional chips and pretzels. This webisode offers great tips for parents too.

For more information regarding these important topics, visit the [Media](#) section of Mission Healthy Living today.

**Spring 2013 Grant Round:** The following list includes 36 grants, totaling \$1,372,567 awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, and municipalities. These programs play a major role in supporting the Foundation's mission of promoting healthy lifestyles within the community.

**PRIORITY #1: Funding programs and solutions for long-term improvement in healthy behaviors.**

**PRIORITY #1A: Promoting healthy living through nutrition, activities and programs in public and private schools to reduce obesity and encourage healthy living. (\$676,372)**

**Boyertown Area School District** – Brain Body Connection

**Brookeside Montessori** – Grow Up Fit

**Coventry Christian School** – Project Purpose

**Daniel Boone Area School District** – Healthy for a Lifetime Program

**Falkner Swamp Nursery School, Inc.** – Health and Wellness Proposal

**Grace Lutheran Preschool** – Development of Outdoor Play Space

**Owen J. Roberts School District** – Fit for Life

**Pottsgrove School District** – Building a Healthy School Community

**Pottstown School District** – PEAK Health and Wellness Initiative

**Pottstown School District** – Healthy School Communities Initiative

**Spring-Ford Area School District** – Wellness Matters! Program

**St. Aloysius School** – “Steps to a Healthier You”

**The Wyndcroft School** – Health for Life – Fresh and Local Fridays

**West-Mont Christian Academy** – Growing Well Together

**PRIORITY #1B: Improving parks, programming and the built environment to increase access to physical activity (\$15,000)**

**North Coventry Township** – Riverside Park Basketball Courts

**St. Joseph's Hill Lutheran Church Day Care Center** – Playground Project

**PRIORITY #1C: Creating and promoting social networks involving healthy living (\$377,100)**

**Developmental Enterprises Corporation/ Pottstown Training Center** – Healthy Eating, Healthy Living

**Greater Pottstown Tennis Association** – Tennis & Learning After-School program

**Green Valleys Association** – Outdoor & Environmental Education programs for Barth Elementary and Pottstown Middle Schools

**Maternity Care Coalition** – Pottstown Area Early Head Start (EHS)

**Olivet Boys & Girls Club** – A Body, Mind & Soul Approach to Community Health and Wellness

**Pottstown Karate Club** – Pottstown Karate Club, CrossFit Pottstown, CrossFit Recovery

**Pottstown Parks & Recreation Foundation** – Rumble Youth Volleyball Clinics

**Schuylkill River Greenway Association** – Bike Pottstown

**The Tennis Farm, Inc.** – Learn Lifetime Sport of Tennis for Pottstown School District Elementary Students

**TriCounty Community Network, Inc.** – Community Collaborative to Improve Health, Social & Environmental Conditions

**Wings of Victory Outreach** – Empowered for Success

**YWCA Tri-County Area** – Healthy Pathways

**PRIORITY #2: Funding programs for physical health and emotional well-being (\$219,940)**

**ACLAMO** – Conexiones por Salud – Community Health Projects

**Community Health and Dental Care, Inc.** – Pottstown Pediatric and Adolescence Fit & Healthy Care Program

**Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County** – Health Insurance Enrollment Initiative

**Maternal and Child Health Consortium of Chester County** – Healthy Start

**PRIORITY #3: Funding learning opportunities and strategic planning to strengthen non-profits (\$84,155)**

**Pottstown Public Library** – Support for Non-Profit Organizations

**United Way of Boyertown** – Matching Grant for Annual Campaign

**United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey** – Increasing Philanthropy and Community Impact in Western Montgomery County

**YWCA Tri-County Area** – Organizational Assessment



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Phone: 610-323-2006  
Fax: 610-323-0047  
[www.pottstownfoundation.org](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org)



[www.missionhealthyliving.org](http://www.missionhealthyliving.org)

## Save the date

### Healthy Bodies... Healthy Minds 2013 Institute

**August 6 and August 7, 2013**

**WHO:** Interdisciplinary school teams and individuals interested in transforming their school into a movement-centered building.

**WHAT:** Expanded two-day institute focusing on the connection between physical activity and improved academic performance.

**WHERE:** The Hill School  
830 Beech Street, Pottstown, PA 19464

On site accommodations available for an additional \$30/night

**REGISTRATION AND COST INFO:**

Register before July 3, 2013

**Rates:**

\$150/person attending individually  
\$100/person attending on a building team of 3 or more.  
Special rates apply for PAHWF Collaborative School members

**MORE INFO:**

[www.pottstownfoundation.org/summerinstitute](http://www.pottstownfoundation.org/summerinstitute)

Registration forms mailed to:  
152 E. High Street, Suite 500, Pottstown, PA 19464

**AUGUST 6**

7:15 a.m. Registration (Cafeteria)  
8:00 a.m. Breakfast Plenary  
9 - 11:45 a.m. Breakout Sessions  
12:00 p.m. Lunch Plenary  
1:45 - 4:30 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
4:30 - 5:30 p.m. Networking Hour  
6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Dinner Reception and Community Keynote

**AUGUST 7**

7:00 a.m. Group Exercise  
8:00 a.m. Breakfast Action Planning  
9:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. Breakout Sessions  
12:30 p.m. Lunch Wrap-Up & Planning  
2:30 p.m. Departure

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

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