

Union Station News

Recovery Month Stories

I have dealt with mental health issues since I was 14 years old. I lost my mother back in 2009 and my grandmother back in 2011. That made me have stress and depression and ultimately led to a nervous breakdown. I have been dealing with these issues for over 12 years now. I have been in the hospital two times because I wanted to hurt myself. I wanted to be with my grandmother and mother. I have been through a lot since they passed away. I have been on meds for over 12 years and I wish they were here to see their grandchildren. They are looking down at them we all miss and love them very much.

~Krysta C.

Both of my grandmothers passed away. I have dealt with a lot of issues over a very long time. I've been on meds for them. My pap passed away also. This caused me a lot of stress and I have anger issues. I have been through a lot in my life and I have been in the hospital 5 times. I am a quiet person that is shy. I don't like to talk when I am mad at somebody.

~Danny G.



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Meetings on Zoom

- House Meeting: Mon @ 2 PM
- Other meetings as announced in the Daily Announcements in the Morning Meeting.

New Member Spotlight!

Sacred B. is our newest member to the Union Station Clubhouse family. She really has begun to like the Clubhouse and has learned a lot since stating her time her by gaining a lot a skills. In the future, she hopes to get a job, a place of her own, and a car.



Standard of the Issue:

16. The work done in the Clubhouse is exclusively the work generated by the Clubhouse in the operation and enhancement of the Clubhouse community. No work for outside individuals or agencies, whether for pay or not, is acceptable work in the Clubhouse. Members are not paid for any Clubhouse work, nor are there any artificial reward systems.

Current COVID-19 Information & Resources

⇒Federal Government Response:

www.coronavirus.gov

⇒PA Department of Health Information

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

⇒Fayette County Fights COVID-19 Facebook Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/206439277088716/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/211053520110419/>

⇒Fayette Area Coronavirus Needs / Availability Group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/211053520110419/>

⇒Clubhouse Calendars:

⇒[Public Events](#)

⇒[Stakeholder/Webinar](#)

⇒[Food Distributions](#)

Community Support Program Updates

- Western Region CSP ahs returned to In-Person meetings for a time until a hybrid format can be developed
- Our CSP, Partners for Recovery will be also meeting via Zoom until Further notice with the next meeting being held at 10:30 AM on Monday, September 27th

Meeting ID:

993 8915 6617

Passcode: 0EK2w2

What Recovery Means to Me

Mental Health Recovery to me means that I have to be proactive on my outlook on life. What is integral is having Mental Health Services such as Clubhouse, Outpatient and Mobile Psych Rehab that address my needs and keep my life purposeful. With a healthy balance of these services, they play a part of maintaining my mental health recovery and being independent.

The remaining responsibility falls within my grounds to control. It is mind over matter. Being a grown man I have to make choices that are in my best interest. Some should come straightforward such as being compliant with my medications on a consistent basis. Others would be doing things that are necessary for survival such as maintaining my home and person along with fulfilling my time so that my mind doesn't wander to a deep and dark place.

It isn't easy for anyone in mental health recovery to maintain independence. But, with some of the tools of the trade I am slowly progressing into a better person each day. Keeping and updating a Wellness Recovery Action Plan or WRAP helps me ensure that I know how I am when I am not in my normal state of mind and signifies the steps necessary to ensure I get back on track and do what I need to do to ensure that I can be myself again.

I've always said that I didn't become the

person I am now. It took a lot of sweat, especially going to work and Clubhouse when all I wanted to do is isolate in my home or miss an therapy session because I didn't feel like facing what I did wrong. But, that is the childish thing to do and it isn't the adult way of handling your faults.

2020 was hard for me with many issues and I did get sort of back on my feet by the end of that year. However, as of now, I am feeling 100% myself again because I am doing everything I need to do to ensure my recovery and that I am doing well.

Every individual recovery journey should be customized to the needs of each and every person because there is no one size fits all approach to all individuals recovery journeys, However with enough steadfast dedication recovery is possible in each and everyone that needs to travel the journey.

~Dustin M.



Getting Help With Food

• Find a Food Pantry (PA.gov) <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/about/Ending-Hunger/Pages/Food-Pantries.aspx>

• Fayette County Community Action is modifying some Food Pantry Operations due to the Coronavirus

- Website: <http://fccaa.org/>
- Facebook (Most Current): <https://www.facebook.com/FCCAA.org/>

• Our Map of Food Pantries in Fayette County / Other Grocery Resources: <https://www.unionstationclubhouse.com/local-food-pantries>

• Honey's Helping Hand Mondays and Thursdays at Biererwood Acres at 1pm! Curbside service! Info: <https://www.facebook.com/Honeys-helping-hand-108365237359113>

• Uniontown Salvation Army has a Pickup Soup Kitchen daily at the Service Center on Fayette Street from 11 AM to Noon During the Week.

• Christian Church of Connellsville holds

free community lunches from 11:30 a.m. to 1 pm. every Monday. It is takeout only.

• Trinity United Presbyterian Church has a food pantry open solely to residents of Uniontown with proper verification of ID. Food is dispersed in relation to the number of people in the household. You will be asked to provide the number of adults and the number of children. The food comes in pre-packaged grocery bags. The Food Pantry pickup is located in the front narthex. Enter through the front doors on Morgantown or Fayette Street. Pickup is the second and last Mondays of the month at NOON.

• FOOD DISTRIBUTION: Fresh Fire Church located at 171 Connellsville Street In Uniontown will hold a food distribution on Thursday, September 9th from 10am-12pm or until we are out of food. This is a drive-thru distribution. Please have your trunk open or back seat unlocked and have space available for the food to be placed in your car. For more information call 724.580.7027 or visit www.freshfirechurch.net

Little Free Pantries are available around the clock at the following locations

- ♦ Highlands Hospital, 401 E. Murphy Ave. Connellsville
- ♦ Connellsville Christian Church, 212 S. Pittsburgh St.
- ♦ Fayette Resources ATF, 1300 Connellsville Road, Lemont Furnace
- ♦ Pleasant View Presbyterian Church, 533 Royal Road. Smock
- ♦ Hutchinson Park Pavilion #4—Uniontown, PA*
- ♦ Areford Park—Frank Hoover Street, Uniontown PA*
- ♦ Smithfield United Methodist Church—20 Church Street, Smithfield
- ♦ Tyrone Presbyterian Church—402 Jintown Road, Dawson (Pavilion)
- ♦ Dawson Volunteer Fire Co. —211 Galley Street, Dawson

* Denotes During Park Hours Only

These boxes operate under a take what you need, give what you can basis..

For more information on the Little Free Pantry Movement, visit: <https://www.littlefreepantry.org/>

For Local Information on Little Free Libraries and Little Free Pantries, visit:

<https://fayettelittle-free.wordpress.com/> & Their Facebook [Page](#) and [Group](#)

Fayette County State Historical Marker of the Issue



Col. William Crawford - PLAQUE

This marker is located on South Pittsburgh Street in Connellsville on the Front Lawn of the Carnegie Free Library and was installed by the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission with its dedication on October 1918. The Marker Text Reads: "In memory of Colonel William Crawford, born in Berkeley County, Virginia, in 1732. Friend of Washington -- pioneer -- patriot. This monument is situated 1260 yards S. 69 E. 16' of the spot where he built his log cabin in 1765 on the west bank of the Youghiogheny River, at the historic Stewart's Crossings. He first visited the region west of the mountains in 1758, as an officer in the expedition of General Forbes against Fort Duquesne. As colonel of the seventh Virginia regiment, he crossed the Delaware with Washington in 1777, and shared in the victory at Trenton. Fighting in defense of the frontier, as commander of the Sandusky Expedition, he was captured by the Indians and burned at the stake near Crawfordsville, Ohio, June 11, 1782."

NEWS FROM SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Do you know these Social Security terms?

Some of the terms and acronyms people use when they talk about Social Security can be a little confusing. We're here to help you understand.

We strive to explain your benefits using easy-to-understand, plain language. The Plain Writing Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to communicate information clearly in a way "the public can understand and use." This can be particularly challenging when talking about complicated programs like Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, and Medicare. If there's a technical term or acronym that you don't know, you can find the meaning in our online glossary at www.ssa.gov/agency/glossary.

Here are a few examples. If you're considering retirement, you may want to know your FRA (full retirement age) and your PIA (primary insurance amount). These terms determine your benefit amount based on when you start getting retirement benefits. The PIA is the amount payable for a retired worker who starts his or her benefits at full retirement age. If you start your retirement benefits at your FRA, you'll receive the full PIA.

Most years, your benefit amount will get a COLA (Cost-of-Living Adjustment), which usually means extra money in your monthly benefit.

What about DRCs (delayed retirement credits)? DRCs are the gradual increases to your PIA that occur the longer you delay taking retirement benefits after your full retirement age. Every month you delay taking benefits, up to age 70, your monthly benefit will increase.

If one of these terms or acronyms comes up in conversation, you can be the one to help clarify the meaning, using our online glossary. Learning the terminology can deepen your understanding of how Social Security programs work for you.

Social Security benefits you

We take pride in having provided vital benefits and services to this great nation for 86 years. America has a diverse population with a variety of needs. To meet those diverse needs, we've created web pages that speak directly to groups of people who may need information about our programs and services. These pages are easy to share with friends and family on social media. Here are just a few resources that might help you or someone you love:

- We proudly serve wounded warriors and veterans, who made sacrifices to preserve the freedoms Americans treasure. Many veterans do not know they might be eligible for disability benefits from Social Security. Please share this page with them to make sure they get the benefits they deserve: www.ssa.gov/people/veterans.

- Social Security plays an important role in providing economic security for women. Nearly 55 percent of the people receiving Social Security benefits are women. A woman who is 65 years old today can expect to live, on average, until about 87. A 65-year-old man can expect to live, on average, until about 84. With longer life expectancies than men, women tend to live more years in retirement and have a greater risk of exhausting their sources of income.

Women often have lower lifetime earnings than men, which usually means lower benefits. Women need to plan early and wisely for retirement. We're here to help with valuable information. Please share this page with someone who needs this information and may need help planning for their golden years: www.ssa.gov/people/women.

- Do you know someone who is just starting their career? Now is the best time for them to start preparing for retirement. Social Security benefit payments provide only a portion of retirement income. Those starting their careers should begin saving early to have adequate income in retirement. Please share this page with a young worker you know: www.ssa.gov/people/earlycareer.

These are just a few of the web pages tailored to specific groups' needs. You can check out our People Like Me home page at www.ssa.gov/people to see all of them.

Social Security services for the Hispanic community

At Social Security, we strive to deliver great customer service and easy-to-access information about our programs. Our Spanish-language website, www.ssa.gov/espanol, provides information for those whose primary language is Spanish. There, your family and friends can learn about how to get a Social Security card, plan for retirement, apply for benefits, manage their benefits, and much more.

We also provide many publications in Spanish at www.ssa.gov/espanol/publicaciones/ on popular topics such as:

- Retirement, Disability, and Survivors benefits.
- Medicare.
- Supplemental Security Income.

Spanish-speaking customers who need to speak with a representative can call us at 1-800-772-1213. Please share these resources with friends and family who may need them.

Nutrition program vouchers still available

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers are still available throughout Fayette, Greene and Washington counties to individuals who are 60 years of age or older by Dec. 31.

The program provides four \$6 vouchers, totaling \$24, to eligible seniors one time during the program year. Applications will be accepted via postal mail or email through Sept. 23.

All checks must be distributed by Sept. 30. The vouchers may be redeemed at designated area farmers' markets through Nov. 30.

An eligible individual's gross income includes interest, Social Security, wages, Black Lung, Unemployment Compensation etc., and must be at or below \$23,828. For two persons in a household, the income may be \$32,227. Stimulus monies received do not count as income.

The Pennsylvania SFMNP is a cooperative effort between the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, the Southwestern PA Area Agency on Aging, senior community centers and other distribution sites to support the nutrition of older adults, as well as to support the economic needs of Pennsylvania farmers by stimulating sales at local farmer's markets.

This year, a hybrid model is being used for voucher distribution. Local senior community centers in Fayette, Greene and Washington Counties are offering in-person distribution of vouchers. Another option is to request an applica-

tion for the vouchers to be mailed. Once the application is approved, the vouchers will be mailed directly to the individual.

Applications are available at local senior community centers, Area Agency on Aging offices and online at www.swpa-aaa.org.

Seniors living in nursing or residential facilities, where meals are provided, are not eligible for the program.

The vouchers are redeemable only at participating farmers' market/vendor sites. Look for the PA Preferred logo when you visit a local farmers' market to purchase fruits and vegetables grown in Pennsylvania.

To find a farmers market or farm stand with eligible farmers, download the FMNP app, available at no cost in the Google Play store and the Apple Store. Search for PA FMNP farmers market locator and download the app. You can also find a list of participating farmers markets at the SFMNP website: www.PAFMNP.org.

For more information on the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program contact a local senior community center in Fayette, Greene or Washington County. Area Agency on Aging can be contacted at 724-489-8080:

- Fayette County, Uniontown, 724-430-4603

Union Station has Employment Outing in August



In place of the August Employment Dinner, the members who are employed in our Transitional and

Supported Employment Programs chose to have an after hours outing at a local park. We couldn't have asked for a better day to have one. Scott was our host at Dunlap Creek Park in Menallen Township where five of us took host to sandwich rings bagged snacks and bottled water. While discussing the state of our work and goals, we took in

the beautiful Fayette County Scenery as this has been a long time goal of both the staff and members of the Clubhouse. In the future, we may make this an annual event where we will invite all that were employed in the past year as other clubhouses do this already.

~Dustin M.



Beacon Health Options to Have Award Ceremonies Virtually in 2021

Please join Beacon as we acknowledge HealthChoices members' journeys in the mental health/substance use disorder service system. Beacon will host virtual awards ceremony through a zoom platform for both Family/Parent/Caregivers of children and adolescent HealthChoices members and Adults who are HealthChoices members. Help us to celebrate the journeys of twelve Family/Parent/Caregivers and twelve journeys of Adults living with mental health/substance use disorders. Attend and be inspired by the individual stories of success to wellness that are found within each recovery journey.

We look forward to having you join us!

Please join* the Ceremony by clicking on the links below on Tuesday, September 21, 2021

Family/Parent/Caregiver Ceremony 10:00-12:00 join here:

<https://beaconhealthoptions.zoom.us/j/99004815366?pwd=eUdVODQ3U3Eva2ZzNU90SHQvSIRhZz09> **Passcode 361243**

Adult Ceremony 1:00-3:30 join here:

<https://beaconhealthoptions.zoom.us/j/95606770460?pwd=ZTFzRkxkNVpKOHpVL0oraHVOSmNXQT09> **Passcode: 483888**

Beacon Member and Family Zoom Meeting Calls Continue Through Sep-

Beacon Health Options Prevention, Education, and Outreach Department invites you to join us on a Zoom meeting. The purpose of the call is to share information, updates and provide opportunities to network with other Beacon members and family members. The meeting will be hosted by Beacon's Prevention, Education and Outreach staff. We welcome Beacon members and families to join us. All calls are from 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm each month

The next one will be on Monday, September 27th.

One can join via the videoconferencing app Zoom by following the [link](#)
Meeting ID: 963 6668 5245
Passcode: 773174

If unable to join by the Zoom link above, please dial in on the specific date at 1:00pm EST 1-646-876-9923 to join by phone. The Meeting ID and Passcode are listed above.

Easy tips to feel cool, conserve energy

As extreme summer heat continues for communities across much of the state, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission is stressing a series of simple ways that residents can stay cool, conserve energy and keep their bills manageable.

Increase summer comfort while keeping energy costs low:

- Fan yourself: Fans circulate the air, keeping you feeling cooler, even at higher temperatures.

Follow the Shade: Relax in rooms that do not receive direct sunlight.

Block the Heat: Use window blinds and coverings at the sunniest time of day to reduce unwanted heat buildup.

- Don't Add Extra Heat: Postpone using heat-producing appliances, such as clothes dryers, dishwashers and stoves until it is cooler.
- Cookout, Anyone?: Consider cooking with outdoor barbecue grills or microwaves, rather than stoves or ovens, which add indoor heat.

Circulating air with a fan can help you feel up to 4 degrees cooler, without needing to lower your thermostat.

In addition to simple ways to feel cooler on hot summer days, the PUC also underscored a series of ways to help conserve energy and avoid generating unwanted heat inside your home.

Ways to Save

Conserve energy and save money while staying cool:

- Check your Thermostat: The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures, the lower your overall cooling bill.
- Clean is "Green:" Clean and replace air conditioner filters regularly and make sure air circulation paths are clear.
- Power Off: Turn off non-essential appliances and lights to reduce power use and unwanted heat.
- Don't Cool Unneeded Space: Close off unused rooms and adjust air vents or thermostats to avoid unnecessary cooling expenses.
- Keep the Heat Outside: Seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from leaking into your home.

Every degree you raise your air conditioning thermostat above 72 degrees can save up to 3% on cooling expenses.

In addition to cooling and conservation tips, the PUC also encouraged residents to review the hot weather safety information from the Pennsylvania Department of Health, along with tips for keeping pets safe during hot weather, from the Humane Society of the United States.

Hot Weather & Utilities

The PUC notes that hot and humid weather can prompt PJM – the region's power transmission organization – to issue "Hot Weather Alerts," preparing utilities and generation operators for conditions that could stress the power grid and working to ensure that resources are available to meet energy demands.

In response to hot weather alerts, electric distribution companies across Pennsylvania take steps to prepare for high demand and other hot-weather issues, including the postponement or rescheduling of routine maintenance related outages, placing additional staff and equipment on stand-by in the event of outages and reaching out to customers regarding energy conservation and/or access to ice, water, cooling centers and other support services, should they be needed during any outages.

The PUC is in close communication with EDCs, PJM and other key stakeholders during these types of weather alerts and continues to actively monitor utility systems across the state.

SPECIAL FEATURE ARTICLE SECTION

CLUBHOUSE MEMBER IS FIRST ONE TO GO ON DISNEY CRUISE!



By George Hu.

PROLOGUE

Ever since I was just a kid, I have always wanted to go on a Disney Cruise. The only problem? In those days of my life my parents never had the money. When I finally got my Clerical TEP at Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania's Workforce Development Center, that all changed for the better, as I had at long last acquired the means by which to earn the required funds. Unfortunately, on March 19 of last year, the onslaught of the COVID-19 Pandemic had begun, resulting in me losing my job by being permanently laid off due to the lockdown that happened at the same time. It wasn't all bad, though, since while he was still in office, Trump reached a deal with Congress (the Federal one, not the State one called the General Assembly!) where those Americans who were eligible would end up receiving Stimulus Checks. This is what ultimately paid for my trip. My parents did the booking and took care of all the important paperwork, and then all that was left was to wait until Friday, August 20, 2021. After that it was time to wait for the two travel days to pass by, and eventually we arrived at our ultimate destination of Cocoa Beach, which is a town that is located right next door, of all places, to Port Canaveral!

THE DAY PRIOR TO EMBARKATION: NASA

What about that third day? Well, this doesn't really have anything to do with the trip, but as it turns out, before the actual cruise, on Sunday August 22, I ended up getting to visit Kennedy Space Center, which we all know by its more common name, NASA, whose acronym stands for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Located just north of the port, the visitor complex had everything one could hope for with the exception of seeing the famous launch tower they used to launch the Space Shuttle up close. This ranged from getting to see Mission Control—not only in-person but also in action during a previous launch—to viewing the launch tower from afar to actually experiencing first-hand what it's like to be launched into orbit on the Space Shuttle. Afterwards, it was just a matter of killing time for the evening.

DAY ONE: EMBARKATION DAY!

At last the big day had finally arrived. However, our Port Arrival Time was not until 2:00 in the afternoon, so we used the extra time to learn how to get into and out of the port and then check out the local surf shops afterwards. Eventually, though, the big moment had arrived, as it was finally time to go through the process of actually boarding the *Disney Dream*!



Our ship, the *Disney Dream*

To do that, first came the curbside stop at the porters. Here we got out of the vehicle and removed our checked luggage. In exchange for doing so, the porters then gave our vehicle a dark blue piece of paper for the windshield, which effectively enables cruisers who are vaccinated against COVID-19 to bypass testing and go straight to their parking spaces in the garage.



View of the DCL parking garage and checked luggage drop-off

After that, we had to scan our passports just inside the main gates of the terminal.



Front gates of the Disney Cruise Line Terminal

This was followed by a brief escalator ride upstairs, where we were greeted by a rather large model of a different Disney cruise ship from the one we were on.



Cruise Ship Model Inside DCL Terminal

Unfortunately, one of the Cast Members (Disney's employees) had accidentally entered the data from my dad's passport incorrectly prior to arrival, but that problem turned out to be only a mere typo and was quickly resolved at Guest Services. Afterward it was just a matter of walking through the Giant Mickey Ears at the other end of the terminal from where we rode the escalators.



The Giant Mickey Ears which serve as the entrance to the gangway to the ship

At the other end of the gangway, we had to wait in a short line. But you may be wondering what that was all about? Well, you know how Disney said on their website there wouldn't be any parties? Contrary to said website, there was a socially distanced Sail-Away party in the Atrium on Deck 3! In case you are curious, this is where all the cruisers on our voyage ended up the minute they stepped onto the ship.



Disney Dream Atrium, with the boarding gates at left



Me standing next to the stairs of the Atrium during the Sail Away Party

The only thing that followed the Sail-Away Party was the Mandatory Muster Drill, but all we had to do as a group was to head to our station, which was F in our case, and check in with the Cast Member who was located there, and they simply thanked us for checking in and then told us that the Embarkation process, also known as the boarding process, was complete.

With that being said, we headed to Stateroom 10564, which is a Deluxe Oceanview Stateroom With Verandah.

After changing, I decided to immediately head upstairs to Deck 12 to ride the “AquaDuck,” whose name is a pun on the word *aqueduct* but is essentially a water-coaster at sea! I also enjoyed the adult-only portion of Deck 11.



Decks 11 and 12, Midship, with the AquaDuck running along the border

Awhile later, around 6 in the evening, I headed up to the bow of the ship, also called Satellite Falls, on Deck 12, and for a good reason. At that time, around 45 minutes later, once the crew had gotten rid of all the mooring ropes, the ship’s horn blew, but this wasn’t any ordinary horn, with the reason being that instead of being a long blast, it was a Disney song that played! First came “When You Wish Upon a Star,” followed by “A Dream Is a Wish Your Heart Makes,” and then “Do you Wanna Build a Snowman?” from *Frozen*. Then the horn played “Be Our Guest” and “Yo Ho! Yo! Ho! A Pirate’s Life for Me” and even “It’s a Small World After All.” Shortly after the second song played, we had officially set sail and were headed exactly eastward to exit the port via the main waterway, and from there we headed out to sea.



Satellite Falls on Deck 12, aka the bow of the *Disney Dream*

Once we had seen everything there was to see on the way to sea (that sounds like quite the tongue twister!), it was time for our dinner at the Royal Palace, which was my favorite of the 3 rotational dining restaurants aboard the ship from a visual standpoint. Although we were assigned the later seating at 8 in the evening, we were lucky enough to be situated right smack in the middle of the giant medallion that was printed into the carpet, right in front of the professional pianist who came to play for the evening!



Royal Palace

Sadly, I didn't do anything after dinner, so it was time to go back to the stateroom for the night.

DAY TWO: DAY AT SEA

The next day, Tuesday August 24, 2021, was our Day At Sea, but for me it was a day to meet some Princesses, which was why I wanted to sail with Disney in the first place. You might think the Princesses are just for young ladies below the age of 12, but in reality, anyone who loves them, including myself, can meet them! Before doing anything, though, I first went up to Deck 11 to get breakfast at Cabanas, which is the ship's buffet restaurant. Due to the pandemic, sanitation was key.



Cabanas

Then I put on my prince costume and headed down to Deck 3. Princess Cinderella was out first, but as I approached her, she swapped places with Princess Ariel. I asked her how she likes it out there at sea, and sure enough, she really enjoys it!



Princess Ariel (taken from my video footage)

Later that day, following a buffet lunch at Cabanas, I came upon a chance meeting with Rapunzel and forgot to put my special prince costume on. I mentioned that thanks to the pandemic we were all “locked in our towers,” as it were, but once the lockdowns were lifted followed by me ultimately getting to be on the ship, I told her “...and at last we had seen the light.” She seemed to agree with me wholeheartedly on that note by mentioning in her own special way that she also wanted to be free of her prison.



Princess Rapunzel (taken from my video footage)

After the meeting with Rapunzel, I went to Sea Treasures, which is one out of a few other stores aboard the ship, and bought a model of the *Disney Dream* for about \$50.



Mall corridor on Deck 3 with Sea Treasures at right

That evening, we were doing something before 5:45, when we ran into Minnie Mouse in what appeared to be a bridal gown on the balcony of Deck 4 in the Atrium. She said that she had made the gown herself, which I thought was pretty impressive.



Me alongside “Bridal Minnie”













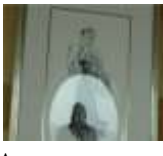

Afterwards I had some time to kill so I figured it was high time to go for another couple rounds of the AquaDuck, so up to Deck 12 I went!

When I was done on Deck 12, it was time for the 5:45 showing of *Believe*, which is a musical that was being seen in the Walt Disney Theater. We were actually seated in the row on the main level where the steeper back portion meets the more gradual portion, right behind the guardrail, so we would be elevated above the rest of the audience in front of us to some degree. In this musical, various characters from different Disney movies each helped a man who was a biological scientist as well as the father of a girl named Sophia. Each character helped him in their own special way to learn how to believe in magic, specifically Disney magic, which is the type of magic that causes good things to occur. The reason he wanted to believe in magic was that he needed a special flower to grow for a gardening convention and none of his scientific approaches were working, so he asked the question, “What makes the garden grow?” during one of the many musical numbers in the performance. He also wanted to help his daughter by getting this special plant to spring up. Throughout the course of the musical, and ultimately at the end, he learned the answer to his question was that not just magic, but more importantly, love is also what makes the garden grow.



Walt Disney Theater

The last event for the evening was dinner at Animator's Palate, which is located behind Royal Palace on Deck 3. The corridor leading to said restaurant is probably my favorite part of the entire ship, as on the way to Animator's, if you looked to the left, there was an entire wall that was full of Princesses in art form! It is for this reason I nicknamed this corridor as "Princess Row." This corridor consisted of the following Princesses.

				
Belle (Town version)	Belle?	Aurora	Cinderella	Pocahontas
				
Jasmine	Cinderella	Snow White	Aurora	Tiana
				
Jasmine	Mulan	Snow White	Aurora	Alice in Wonderland (not really a Princess)

At any rate, Animator's Palate was nothing to write home about as far as looks go save for the giant pencils and paintbrushes that served as columns as well as the fact that certain parts of the ceiling turned from one color of the rainbow to the next, but the meals that were served there were awesome.



Animator's Palate

Similar to Embarkation Day, dinner was the last order of business for the day, so it was off to bed in preparation for the first of two days at an island paradise.

DAY THREE: FIRST DAY AT CASTAWAY CAY

When we first woke up, the first thing I did was to step out onto the Verandah. I had spotted what looked to be our island destination of Castaway Cay, so I immediately cried out “Land Ho!” Mind you this is a tropical island we are referring to here, so it definitely does not look like any islands you might see in your local area!



Castaway Cay as seen from our Stateroom

The first thing we did was to eat at Cabanas again before joining the virtual que to get off. Ordinarily there is no such thing as a virtual que but because of the pandemic it was put in place to assist with social distancing. On the way to Pelican Point, which is where we were headed on the island, we came across a couple of cannons.



A cannon on Castaway Cay

Once the cannon photo op was done and over, we finished heading to Pelican Point using island transportation. Unfortunately, the miniature waterpark called Pelican Plunge was closed for refurbishment for the entire duration of the cruise, but at least its beach was still available.



Pelican Point, whose watersides were sadly closed when we visited

Since we ended up with sandy feet, we happened upon a small spray park on the way to lunch called “Spring A Leak,” which we used to spray away the sand.

Then we went to Cookies Too, which is basically what a high school cafeteria during lunch period would look like if you stuck it outside, albeit under a pavilion of gargantuan-size proportions, so nothing really to note here.

After lunch we went back to the ship and I decided to go to Deck 12 for a couple more times on the AquaDuck.

At some point I decided it was time to go back to the stateroom and put my prince costume back on, since I guessed quite accurately that there was a Royal Audience waiting for me downstairs. However, it was only a brief encounter with Jasmine from below the balcony, and she did not really have anything to say.

However, it was Pirate Night, so as part of our 8 PM dinner, there was a pirate show taking place where they sang familiar pirate songs such as “What do you do with a lazy pirate?”

Normally after dinner would come the close of the day, but not this time! At about 10 in the evening we all went upstairs to Deck 12, although I did not ride the AquaDuck at night like some others might. Instead, there was actually a very special reason we were up here, and that was the fact that there was a firework show at sea called “Disney Ever After!” Although impressive, it only lasted a mere 3 or 4 minutes. Only after the “cannon fire” did we conclude our first day in port at Castaway Cay by heading back to the stateroom.



Disney Dream lido at night (disregards the crowds due to the pandemic)

DAY FOUR: SECOND DAY AT CASTAWAY CAY

On the second day we were at Castaway Cay, I woke up early and snuck out of the stateroom without waking my parents in order to attempt to get more meet-and-greets. However, I then learned from my parents when I went to breakfast at Cabanas to meet up that there were none until 2 in the afternoon. As a result, we went back to Pelican Point at Castaway Cay for some snorkeling, but didn't see anything but seaweed since we didn't know until someone else had said that we had to swim to a red buoy in order to see anything of interest.

Then we went back to Cookies Too for another seaside lunch, cafeteria-style, as per the previous day.

Once we had our fill, we headed back to the ship where I headed straight to Deck 12 where I rode the AquaDuck 5 times in a row thanks to there being no line. After that I had run out of energy, so I headed back and decided to put my Prince costume on. I had only 2 or 3 minutes to spare until 2, when the Princesses were supposed to come out again, so I hurried to the elevators quickly as possible and made it to the Atrium on Deck 3 right on schedule.

This time around, Princess Jasmine was out first, but since I had already met her at this point in the voyage, I decided to wait until she switched out with what turned out to be Princess Tiana.

When meeting Tiana, I told her my story about having my position until the pandemic cut me short of completing its program by three weeks, but then mentioned the stimulus checks and how I had to save both types of money to fund the trip and therefore get to meet not only her, but the other Princesses as well. I decided to mention that in this way, just like her, I worked hard to make my dream come true. You see, Tiana was also a hard worker, just like me. All she asked is to promise to keep up with said hard work, and that seemed to be a pretty easy promise to keep, so why not?



Princess Tiana

After the audience with Tiana, it was back to the Walt Disney Theater for a live version of *Beauty and the Beast*. If you are familiar with the newer, live-action version of the film, you will be more probable than not to have a somewhat decent idea of how the story will play out on stage. My favorite scene had to be when they sang “Be Our Guest,” as they hit the ball out of the park during that particular scene!

Next came dinner at Enchanted Garden, which is on Deck 2. Since this restaurant is the only thing on that deck, no one really goes down there unless they get a rather large appetite. This place looks absolutely stunning! It was designed to look like one of those more formal French gardens in the countryside, complete with trellises, fancy flowers, and symmetric geometry. The dinner here was ranked second only to Animator’s Palate in my opinion.



Enchanted Garden

Sadly, that was all she wrote for this particular evening, and all the festivities had drawn to a close for the voyage except for the fact we had to pack our checked luggage and place it outside by 10:30 in the evening at the absolute latest.

FINAL DAY: DISEMBARKATION

You know what they say when you hear the quote that says all good things must come to an end, and it is very unfortunate that the cruise had to be one of them, so we packed our carry-ons to prepare to leave the ship, unfortunately, for good. Thankfully, we did not have to disembark before we had a huge breakfast at Enchanted Garden. I ordered what the menu called a “Route 66,” which in this case is not a roadway, but in actuality is essentially your standard cooked continental breakfast that one would grow up with and love for their entire life, albeit on steroids and served sit-down style instead of buffet-style.

To close out the trip as a whole, we walked off and then went back through security and customs, and then we matched our luggage tags to the overhead signage to find our checked bags. After that it was simply a walk back to our parking space, and with that, the cruise was completed.

EPILOGUE

And so, with the voyage going smoothly and as planned, I was left feeling extremely grateful that somehow we lucked out with not getting cancelled in addition to the fact that I was able to self-fund the voyage in its entirety. While I did not meet all the Princesses I wished to meet, I’ll just say that the trip in and of itself, with everything else, made for one magical vacation that will very likely not soon end up being forgotten! And you know how most fairy-tale stories end, so you could easily guess this one’s ending, since we lived happily after after—well, at least as far as this vacation was concerned, anyway!

CHOCOLATE CHIP PEANUT BUTTER COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 cups **Santa Cruz Organic**® Light Roasted Creamy Peanut Butter
- 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1/4 cup Water
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon Salt
- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

DIRECTIONS

- **Step 1**
 - HEAT oven to 375°F.
 - **Step 2**
 - BEAT peanut butter and brown sugar in large bowl with mixer on medium speed until creamy. Beat in egg and water until blended. Mix in flour, baking soda and salt until evenly moistened. Stir in chocolate chips. Roll into 48 (1-inch) balls. Place 2 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly with fork in crisscross pattern.
 - **Step 3**
 - BAKE 8 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool 1 minute on baking sheet. Remove to wire rack to cool completely.
- By Quinn P.

Fall Festivals in the Laurel Highlands

- Mountain Craft Days, Somerset Historical Center, Rte. 985, Somerset 9/10—9/12
- Derry Railroad Days, Downtown Derry 9/18—9/19
- Stahlstown Flax Schutching Festival, Route 711, Stahlstown 9/18—9/19
- Scottdale Fall Festival, Downtown Scottdale 9/17—9/19
- Mount Pleasant Glass & Ethnic Festival, Downtown Mount Pleasant 9/24—9/26
- Confluence Pumpkinfest, Confluence Square 10/1—10/3
- Springs Folk Festival, River Road, Springs, PA 10/1—10/2
- Delmont Apple n' Arts Shelds Farm, Delmont 10/2—10/3
- Fort Ligonier Days, Downtown Ligonier 10/8—10/10

Library Statues

- ⇒ Brownsville Free Public Library: Normal Operations
- ⇒ The Carnegie Free Library of Connellsville is open for browsing and computer use 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 2-4:30 p.m. Tuesday & Thursday, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday; no appointment is needed. Mask wearing is required. Appointments are still offered for curbside service to pick up or return loaned materials. Call 724-628-1380 for an appointment. Patrons can request materials by phone or online at www.waggin.org. Computer use is limited to 1 hour. Printing is available. Cost is 25 cents per printed side for B/W and \$1.00 per side for color. Only cash is accepted.. Copying and faxing are available. Only cash is accepted. Masks must be worn and social distancing followed while in the library.
- ⇒ Dunbar Community Library is open on Tuesdays from 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM and Thursdays from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
- ⇒ The Mary Fuller Frazier Community Library in Perryopolis will be resuming winter hours after the being closed for Labor Day week.
- ⇒ The German-Masontown Public Library is open 10-4 Mondays-Thursdays. Due to Coronavirus concerns, we are limiting the amount of patrons inside at one time, so you may have to wait your turn. Please be sure to wear your mask.
- ⇒ The Point Marion Public library will be adding additional days and hours to their schedule. Monday through Thursday schedule of hours from 5 pm – 8 pm. Friday and Saturday hours will be from 10 – noon.
- ⇒ The Republic Community Library is open normal operating hours
- ⇒ The Smithfield Library is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 Noon to 5:00 PM
- ⇒ The Uniontown Public Library is open normal operations on Monday from 9:30 AM to 6:00 PM and Tuesday through Friday 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM



Little Free Libraries in Fayette County

- ◆ Laughlin Street, Dawson
- ◆ Comfort Inn, Connellsville
- ◆ Lion's Square, Connellsville
- ◆ Laurel Mall, Dunbar Twp.
- ◆ LaFayette School, Uniontown
- ◆ County Courthouse, Uniontown
- ◆ Old Central School, Uniontown
- ◆ Fay-Penn Business Center, Uniontown
- ◆ Hutchinson Park, Brownfield
- ◆ Jumonville Camp, Hopwood
- ◆ Fairchance Borough Building
- ◆ Keisterville Ballfield
- ◆ Smock Post Office
- ◆ Lenora's, Perryopolis
- ◆ Benners, Farmington
- ◆ Downtown Ohiopyle
- ◆ Newell United Methodist Church
- ◆ Springfield-CNP School, Normalville
- ◆ Fayette County CYS, Uniontown
- ◆ Jacobs Creek Park, Bullskin
- ◆ Cove Run Church, Lemont Furnace

For more information visit <https://littlefreelibrary.org/> or <https://fayettelittlefree.wordpress.com/>

NEED HELP ??

- ⇒ Fayette County Crisis Line
724-437-1003
- ⇒ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
Veterans Press 1
- ⇒ Crisis Text Line: Text "PA" to 741-741
- ⇒ Pennsylvania Sexual Assault Helpline – 1-888-772-7227
- ⇒ National Domestic Violence Helpline – 1-800-799-7233
- ⇒ Persevere PA (COVID-19 Crisis Counseling Program) -
1-855-284-2494

More Helplines are at:

<http://www.unionstationclubhouse.com/hotlines.html>



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A program of Goodwill Southwestern Pennsylvania

www.goodwillswpa.org



Chocolate Cheesecake Ingredients

- 1 cup crushed chocolate wafer crumbs
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- **FILLING:**
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs, room temperature, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Strawberries and white chocolate shavings, optional

Directions

- In a small bowl, combine cookie crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in. spring form pan; set aside. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Set aside.
- In a large bowl, beat the cream

cheese, sugar and flour until smooth. Add eggs; beat on low just until combined. Stir in vanilla and melted chocolate just until blended. Pour filling over crust.

- Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.

Garnish slices with strawberries and chocolate shavings if desired. Refrigerate leftovers.

~Jesse B.



Virtual Support Groups through MHA of SW Penna.

Contact Heather Mclean
@ hmclean@mhaswpa.org
or (724) 433-1359 for further info.

- **Aging Up Support Group (Transitional Ages 18-26)**
Every 2nd and 4th Monday of every month
Time: 4:00PM-5:00PM
- **MH Support Group (Mental Health)**
Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of

every month
Time: 1:00PM-2:00PM

- **LGBTQ+ Support Group**
Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of every month
Time: 6:00PM-7:00PM
- **The "Anyone" Support Group (For anyone wanting to talk)**
Every 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month
Time: 6:00PM-7:00PM