

The POINT!



E-Letter of the Western Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies
Vol. 10 No. 2
February 2017

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS WORTH NOTING!

'Fences' costumes and props will be exhibited at the August Wilson ...

By Sharon Ebersson / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

While August Wilson's "Fences" was on its way to four Oscar nominations, the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust was working with Paramount Pictures and director-star Denzel Washington to finalize plans for the exhibition "Fences Up Close: A Pittsburgh Story" for a Saturday opening at the August Wilson Center's 1839 Gallery.

The movie studio has contributed costumes and props from the film, and a video montage of interviews will be played on a loop in the display, which also will include the football uniform worn by including the baseball and bat swung by Mr. Washington as former Negro League baseball player Troy Maxson.

The Exhibition will run through March 10 and is free and open to the public.

IN DEFENSE OF SOCIAL STUDIES!

A central role to play in helping people absorb and integrate scientific ideas.

Safe places for unsafe ideas | Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

We are indeed living in "Strange Times," to invoke the title of a new Carnegie Museums Nexus series on the Anthropocene — that is, Earth in the age of humans.

Scientific evidence of the impact of human activity on the planet that sustains us mounts exponentially and, to many, alarmingly. Debate about the science, how public policy should respond and what it means for personal economic and lifestyle choices is active across the political spectrum. . . .

. . . we believe that museums . . . have an essential role to play in encouraging informed, thoughtful, imaginative and, above all, civil discussion of ideas that really matter. As is often said, at their best, museums are "safe places for unsafe ideas."

. . . Museums of art, performing artists, historians of the arts and sciences, educators, scholars in the humanities and many others therefore have central roles to play in helping people absorb and integrate scientific ideas. Imagination allows us to conceive of possible new worlds; creativity allows us to see how they might come to be; empathy allows us to consider how beings other than ourselves might experience them.

Historians and philosophers make us aware of what has happened before and how we know what we think we know. The best answers, the wisest understandings about the relationship of humanity and earth, will emerge not from science alone but from science in the context of the arts and humanities. . . . Read more!

IN PROMOTING OUR MISSION TO FOCUS ON LOCAL AND FAMILY HISTORY, WPCSS ANNUALLY PRESENTS TWO \$100 SAVINGS BONDS FOR THE BEST LOCAL OR FAMILY HISTORY EXHIBIT IN BOTH JUNIOR AND SENIOR ENTRIES OF THE LOCAL NATIONAL HISTORY DAY COMPETITION AT THE HEINZ HISTORY CENTER

Soldiers & Sailors Hall!

Soldiers & Sailors Memorial Hall & Museum houses a vast collection of primary and secondary documents and military artifacts. It is their mission to promote the use of these educational items and create an understanding for all groups who visit the museum. They provide a rich learning experience for all people by exploring the deeds and sacrifices of ordinary citizens during extraordinary circumstances.

The Education Dept. 412.621.4253 Tim Neff x 219
<http://www.soldiersandsailorshall.org/education.html>



In North Braddock, Residents are Reviving a Forgotten Playground ...

BY **MATTHEW NEWTON** SEP 16, 2016

Al Borde is a collective of young architects based in Quito, Ecuador, where they have found innovative ways of building shared spaces for underserved communities in both urban and rural settings. In Spanish, the name Al Borde means “at the edge,” which reflects the ethos of the group’s practice. Known for grafting new concepts onto existing architectural structures, working on projects with limited budgets, and recruiting the community to help, the collective has been praised for its populist approach to architectural design.

Al Borde is . . . helping with an ongoing project called **Recycle Park**—a once-vibrant playground that residents have been rehabilitating with reusable materials in recent years. more. . .



Zelienople Historical Society

243 S. Main Street • Zelienople, PA 16063 • 724-452-9457

Zelienople was named for the eldest daughter, Zelig, of Baron Dettmar Base who settled on depreciation lands in 1802 upon arriving from Germany. Two famous western Pennsylvania families have ties to this town.

Zelig married Phillippe Louis Passavant who became the first merchant in the new settlement. The Passavant House now serves as the Historical society headquarters and museum.

Christian Buhl, the town’s hatter and furrier built the Buhl House which became an addition to the Zelienople museum.

The Zelienople Historical Society office is open 9:00 A.M. - 12:00 P.M. Monday through Friday. Tours begin weekdays at 9:30 A.M. at Passavant House. Prior notice is appreciated. Groups and alternate times are by appointment. Please remember that our docents are volunteers; same day requests may not be possible.



*BARC Flatiron Building Heritage Museum & Visitor Center

69 Market Street • Brownsville, PA 15417 • 724-785-9331

Experience a celebration of Brownsville’s rich history. Learn how Brownsville was a catalyst for development during westward expansion. Discover life as a miner during the coal boom. Reach into Brownsville's past as a center for steamboat and barge production. Uncover Brownsville’s legacy as a hub for river and railroad transportation.

*Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation



The Point

Western Pennsylvania Council for the

Social Studies

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learning of social studies in Western

Pennsylvania

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**DeVos hearing addresses school choice, rights**

DeVos (Drew Angerer/Getty Images)

School choice, guns in schools and special education were some of the topics lawmakers asked Betsy DeVos, the nominee for US secretary of education, during her confirmation hearing this week. DeVos addressed school choice during her opening remarks, noting that "Parents no longer believe that a one-size-fits-all model of learning meets the needs of every child."

[National Public Radio](#) (1/17), [The Atlantic online](#) (1/17), [The Washington Post \(tiered subscription model\)](#) (1/17)

Media Analyses: DeVos Faced “Bumpy” Hearing, Appeared Unprepared.

Analysis and commentary regarding Education Secretary-designate Betsy DeVos’ Tuesday evening confirmation hearing is harshly negative. [Politico](#) (1/18, Hefling, Emma, Wermund) reports that DeVos “has gone viral – and not in a good way. After her bumpy confirmation hearing Tuesday night,” DeVos “was a social media sensation Wednesday,” with online video clips showing DeVos “struggling to answer questions about the best way to measure student performance.”

DeVos Attacked For Comment That Schools May Have Guns To Guard Against Grizzlies.

Much of the hearing’s coverage continues to focus on DeVos’ comment that some “schools should have guns on campus to protect against” Grizzly bears. The [AP](#) (1/18, Gruver) says that in places such as Wyoming “Grizzlies attack hunters, tourists and others while they are deep in the backcountry and sometimes even on a quick hike near home.”

The [Washington Post](#) (1/18, Selk) cites DeVos as saying Wapiti School in Wyoming probably uses a gun to ward off Grizzlies, but reports the school does not employ any guns for that purpose.

'20/20' Looks at Struggles of Low-Wage Workers, Including in Education*(Education and the Media)*

Tracy Coleman, who works as an aide at the local elementary school, . . . shaves bars of soap into a bucket to make laundry detergent, saving \$10 a month. Still, the family's income is not enough for its expenses. An \$18 family splurge at McDonald's leaves Coleman wracked with guilt. She also perceives some people as blaming her for the family's financial predicament.

. . . a few more folks in education . . . are highlighted. Eric and Dustin (no last names provided), who work as adjunct professors at Washington University in St. Louis, . . . "they teach a heavy load" and are "paid, . . . at rates that don't add up to a living income." more..

Nothing is stronger than habit. Ovid, Roman poet

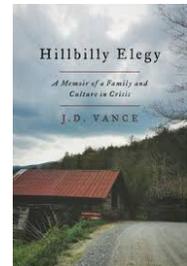
Preparing Students for College, Career and CITIZENSHIP

This guide -- Preparing Students for College, Career and CITIZENSHIP: A Guide to Align Civic Education and the CCSS for ELA and Literacy in History/ Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects -- provides English-Language Arts teachers with a civic education context for improving literacy skills and also provides social studies teachers with a framework for building literacy competencies needed for civic life. Lesson activities in each of the grade spans follow a natural progression that build students' historical knowledge of the foundations of democracy, an understanding of how America's constitutional principles are reinterpreted over time, and the skills and dispositions needed for effective citizenship. Students are called to actively participate in activities that strengthen reading, writing, speaking and listening skills in the context of civic dialogue, debate, persuasion and action. [Read on.](#)



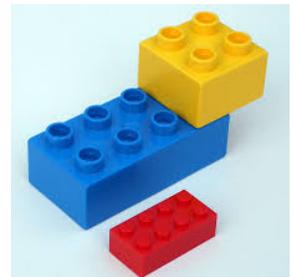
School and the Author of *Hillbilly Elegy*

In this video, J.D. Vance, author of *Hillbilly Elegy, A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*, discusses the effects of a changing economy, the roots of the opioid epidemic, and the role of schools in confronting these issues. [Read more.](#) (Rules for Engagement)



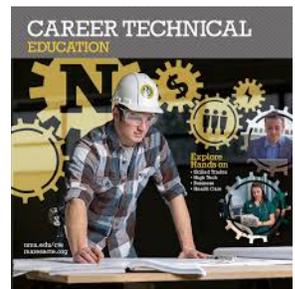
Students Take Part In Western Pennsylvania FIRST Lego Competition.

The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (1/8, Schackner) reports that students from Ohio, West Virginia, and Western Pennsylvania took part in the Western Pennsylvania FIRST LEGO League Grand Championship over the weekend in Pittsburgh. Event organizer Marcel Bergerman stressed that the competition promotes STEM fields and “encourages good communication skills by requiring the students to develop and present their research before tournament officials.”



Pennsylvania Legislators Call For Enhancing CTE Programs.

The [State College \(PA\) Centre Daily Times](#) (1/7) reports that two Pennsylvania legislators have issued a report containing “encouraging news for local career technical school administrators who aim to make sure their students are ready for the workforce.” The report contains “40 recommendations in five categories for CTE institutions.”



Poet: I can't answer questions on Texas standardized tests about my own poems

When I realized I couldn't answer the questions posed about two of my own poems on the Texas state assessment tests *([STAAR Test](#)), I had a flash of panic – oh, no! Not smart enough. . . .

The two poems in question are “A Real Case,” appearing on the 2014 Grade 7 STAAR Reading Test, and “Midnight,” appearing on the 2013 Grade 8 STAAR Reading Test. Both poems originally appeared in “Walking on the Boundaries of Change,” Boyds Mills Press, 1998. Also: 'How in the name of all that's moldy did this poem wind up on a proficiency test?'

By Valerie Strauss • [Read more »](#) * State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness



[How to Be a Global Thinker - ASCD](http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec16/vol74/num04/How-to-Be-a-Global-Thinker.aspx)

<http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/dec16/vol74/num04/How-to-Be-a-Global-Thinker.aspx>

When you walk into Nancy's 5th grade classroom, you breathe in an atmosphere of interest in the world. Student-written reflections on issues of global concern, world news articles, and portraits of her students (who come from more than eight different countries) cover the walls, reflecting the rich immigrant community served by this public school in Portland, Maine.

The day begins with students watching the news. Today, they learn about the Syrian families arriving in Greece and a new agreement between the European Union and Turkey intended to ameliorate the refugee crisis.

[Global-Ready Students](http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol12/1209-toc.aspx)

<http://www.ascd.org/ascd-express/vol12/1209-toc.aspx>

Jan 13, 2017 ... "Students who are globally competent are able to investigate the world, ... and resources that will help you grow **global-ready students**.

[Creating a new world through global education](#)

A global education doesn't always have to be about world events but rather how to live in the world. A unit on government and leadership culminates in a performance task where students practice listening, respectfully disagreeing, encouraging others and leading. When students have a stake in leading their learning and their world, they are intrinsically invested in the outcomes. [Read now.](#)

[ASCD: Finland exemplifies whole-child education](#)

(Pixabay)

Finland, with its focus on equity and emphasis on health, well-being and social-emotional education, is a leading example of whole-child education, asserts Sean Slade, senior director of global outreach for ASCD. Slade -- and others -- consider takeaways from what's working in Finnish schools.

[District Administration magazine online](#)

[\(1/20\)](#)

[Why Is Public Education Always Fighting an Uphill Battle?](#)

(Finding Common Ground)

It's tiring to keep fighting uphill. I mean, I'm all about the growth mindset, but some of this is ridiculous. Public schools always seem to be in the position of defending themselves. Over the years, it seems that the U.S. public school system has been in an uphill battle to prove they are effectively teaching students. Perhaps it's been longer than I remember, but ever since A Nation At Risk in the Reagan era, the U.S. public education system has had to defend itself.

[Schools adopt flexible learning spaces](#)

(Pixabay)

Some educators are using flexible learning spaces to allow students to learn anytime, anywhere -- including in hallways, classrooms and other spaces. This feature highlights flexible learning in schools in Illinois, Mississippi and North Dakota.

[EdTech magazine online](#) (1/13) [initiatives.](#) [eSchool News \(free registration\)](#) (1/16)



Care about people's approval and you will be their prisoner. Laozi, philosopher

How Education Is Failing Rural America

In rural communities, education is an engine of exodus rather than economic development, write Catharine Biddle and Daniella Hall.

Much has been made of the low educational attainment of rural Trump supporters. Many even view it as the source of support for Trump. Education, as a result, has been touted as the solution to perceptions of an uninformed citizenry by many who look to public schooling as the great hope of our democracy. From their perspective, education is an opportunity to invite young people to cherish the values and skills that will make a democracy thrive, including an appreciation of diversity, the ability to listen, the vocabulary to articulate one's own viewpoint, and the confidence to voice one's opinion. [Read more.](#)



Does Homework Help? - ASCD

Homework is an age-old tradition, but could inequitably penalize students in poverty. Some educators are weighing whether to redesign it or stop assigning it.

When Christina Torres started teaching in 2009, she handed out nightly homework assignments—just as her own teachers had done. Her policy was not unlike those used in other classrooms in her school at the time or in classrooms all over the country.



Larry Cuban on Personalized Learning, Silicon Valley, and K-12: Q&A

(Digital Education)

Few observers have been more skeptical of technology's role in K-12 education than Stanford University professor **Larry Cuban**, whose **books** are an essential guide to understanding how technological innovations are frequently "domesticated" by schools and teachers.

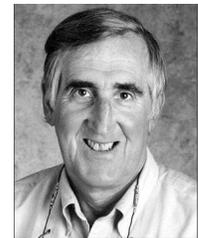
But after three decades of writing about the **classroom limitations of technology**, Cuban **decided last January to take a different tack.**

For the past year, he's been poking around Silicon Valley's most tech-savvy educational efforts, from the **Facebook-affiliated Summit Public Schools charter network**, to private-school-network-slash-software-company **Alt School**, to the algorithm-driven **Teach to One** model, to a handful of traditional public schools who have adopted technology "whole-hog."

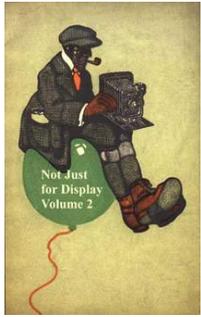
The goal is to better understand how such models are using the internet, computers and tablets, software, and social media platforms for teaching and learning.

"What I saw impressed me greatly," Cuban told *Education Week* in an interview.

"Teachers are regularly and easily integrating technology. It's now in the background, as common as paper and pencils and blackboards were decades ago."



*To move freely you must be deeply rooted. -Bella Lewitsky,
dancer (13 Jan 1916-2004)*



Upcoming Act 48 Teacher Workshops: Winter/Spring 2016-17

A Lens to the Past: From Early Photography to Augmented Reality

Location: Heinz History Center • <http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org> • **Date:** Thursday, Jan. 12, 2017 •

Time: 5 - 8:30 p.m. • **Cost:** \$15 for History Center members; \$20 for non-members • **Credit Hours:** 3

Explore how curators and historians gather evidence and read the clues to unlock the meanings of images and examine the past through the lens of photography. Discover how photography creates a portal to the past and then trace the history of augmented reality from the Viewmaster to Google Cardboard. This hands-on workshop features practical skills and techniques that can be implemented in the classroom using historic photographs and examples of augmented reality.

Building a Collection: The Power of Primary Sources

Heinz History Center • **Date:** Thursday, Feb. 23, 2017 • **Time:** 5 - 8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$20 for History Center members & Frick Art & Historical Center teacher members; \$25 for non-members • **Credit Hours:** 3

The Frick Art and Historical Center offers an in-depth and behind the scenes look at two different types of museum collections. Teachers will tour the History Center's new *Visible Storage* gallery, learn how different individuals and institutions have approached collecting and how this is reflected in the stories the collections tell, and work with educators to explore different ways of building classroom teaching collections. This program includes resource packs with lesson plans.



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Western Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone _____

e-mail address _____

School or Institution _____

Position and Grade level _____

Dues: \$10.00 Amt. enclosed _____

Check made out to WPCSS

*** NOTE: Most communication will be handled by e-mail. Please include e-mail address in order to be informed of coming events. Also, check with your school tech director to see if the fire wall will allow you to receive *The Point*, usually about is size 10 mb. Some firewalls reject attachments over 2 mb.**

Send application and dues to:

Leo R. West Treasurer • 11533 Clematis Blvd. • Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Middle States Council for the Social Studies Conference

Feb 24th/25th

Sands Hotel Conference Center in Delaware

101 North Boardwalk, Rehoboth Beach, DE 19971

Phone: 800-422-0600 | 302-227-2511

www.atlanticsandshotel.com

Social Studies: A Road Map for Social Justice

Some might wonder why a social studies conference would focus on social justice. Given the events taken from today's headlines it becomes quite evident how the two are related. While there are many definitions for social justice there is one constant throughout all of them – social studies disciplines. One cannot understand or explain economic justice without first having knowledge of economic principles.

Social justice requires an understanding of social and political institutions – an understanding that can only be acquired through the study of history and political science. Of course social justice addresses the life situations of diverse groups of people including their customs, movements and interactions which all can be examined through the lens of geography and culture. The way we see it, you cannot address social justice issues without first acquiring the tools learned in social studies. Registration application:

<http://www.midstatescouncil.org/conference-registration/>

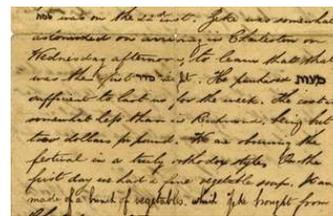
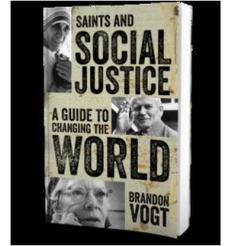
Professional Development Providers Institute

February 7 – March 14, 2016

Tuesday Evenings 5:30-6:30 ET

Whether you coach colleagues or lead groups of fellow teachers, PDPI will prepare you for delivering high-quality teacher professional development focused on Library of Congress digital archives.

- Weekly 1-hour interactive sessions
- Search and save loc.gov primary sources
- Self-paced reading and project development (about 2 hours/week)
- Design a PD activity to share TPS with local educators
- FREE!!



If ever the time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in our government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent its ruin. -Samuel Adams, revolutionary (1722-1803)