

West Pittston Tomorrow Scholarship

West Pittston Resident



September 7th, 2011 was a beautiful fall day in West Pittston. School was in session, football games were being played, the townspeople had settled into schedules/routines after the lazy days of summer. Unfortunately, it had been raining for the past three days...It rained so much that many West Pittston

residents as well as many Luzerne County residents were fearful that a flood was possible. But the 100 years had not passed since 1972 when a very devastating flood had occurred in the valley affecting West Pittston. Memories of that were resurrected with this weather. Fearful, the residents were carefully watching the river, that beautiful Susquehanna River that surrounded West Pittston. The worst happened! ON September 9th the flood became a reality.

In what seemed like the blink-of-an-eye, over a third of West Pittston was damaged or destroyed by the flood. Long standing homes and businesses were lost, never to return, leaving in their stead gaping voids across our neighborhoods and town center. In all, 880 homes were affected by the flooding in 2011. In the years since scores of homes are being razed, far too many remain abandoned, and still others that have been restored by residents are still in need of revitalization.

West Pittston has been a special place for those of us who live here, many for generations. Residents are very proud of this 155-year-old, historic, residential village and enjoy the small town life it provides us. This is why even before the mud was cleared hundreds of West Pittston residents from school children to senior citizens began holding meetings to decide what to do next. Those initial work sessions lasted for months and the collective concerns and solutions were all recorded. From these town meetings and the inspiration they generated, West Pittston Tomorrow was born with a goal of mapping out a long term recovery plan and a vision of a clean safe and progressive community rooted in family values and historic tradition.

West Pittston Tomorrow has embarked on many projects aimed at preserving yesterday, rebuilding today, and sculpting tomorrow. These projects include land use planning, zoning updates, historic designation, architectural preservation, levee feasibility and construction, flood preparedness and community education, flood mitigation and insurance information, protection ordinances, small business support, treescaping, community gardens, and community pride.

A core group of West Pittston citizens continue to meet and sustain this organization. They are working on several projects one of which is to offer a \$500 scholarship to a Wyoming Area graduating senior who resides in West Pittston (for at least his/her senior year) and who has been accepted to a trade, technical school, community college or a 4 year college/university. Consideration may be given to a student who plans on studying environmental science or some type of community outreach study, but future curriculum is not a requirement.

It is the hope of this group that because of their commitment to a graduating student this will serve as a reminder of the love this group has for its town. A love that they hope will continue to flourish with the youth of the town. They hope that their example serves as the motivation for this to happen.

Required Essay: Tell us about any community service project you have been involved with, what your involvement was, why you got involved in that specific community service project and what impact did your service have on both you and the community.

Criteria for Selection: Applicant must be a Wyoming Area graduating senior who is a West Pittston resident (for at least his/her senior year) and who has been accepted to a trade, technical school, community college or a 4 year college/university. Consideration may be given to a student who plans on studying environmental science or some type of community outreach study; but future curriculum is not a requirement.