

Office: 332 Highland Ave.
New Castle, PA 16101
(724) 654-5507

www.CrayYouth.org
www.ConfluenceCoffee.org

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Note from the Director

Let me start by saying WOW!! To those Cray insiders, you know what I mean. It also means a huge expression of gratitude to the Cray supporters out there that made this year's Christmas drive very successful. Your support allowed for a fantastic Christmas for our kids and helped greatly in our time of need.

My last meaning here is - What a year! - so far. Our fiscal year started July 1, 2015. As I write this note, January 21, 2016, we received the first money for the services we provided to the County this year. The problem has not been with the County, but rather, as most of you know, with our elected officials in Harrisburg, who have yet to enact a budget for this year. The Governor did release funds for our services to the County at the end of December, which did not hit our checking account until today. Pennsylvania should not be very proud of itself. State officials did not miss any paychecks during this time, nor state workers, liquor stores remained open, and yet service providers like Cray went without.

The people at Cray have gone above and beyond the call of duty in order to weather this major storm. I am very proud of them! They made many sacrifices, wore many hats, helped and supported each other and still managed to provide great care to our kids. We are not out of the storm yet, but I can see light.

Best Wishes to you in 2016! -David Copper

Note from a Cray Kid

I was just sitting here thinking and really wanted to say thank you again. I really don't have any extended family and no one has ever really helped me out when I needed it. For you guys to go out of your way and help me, means a lot. Especially with all the trouble I gave you as a teenager! I am truly blessed to have you and the rest of Cray as my extended family. From the bottom of my heart, I truly have much love for you all. - C.R.





Big Brothers Big Sisters of Lawrence County

Big and Little News

BBBS is
funded in
part by :



(724) 657-3680

bbbslawco@comcast.net

BBBS aims to provide children who are facing adversity with strong, enduring, professionally supported, one-on-one mentoring relationships that change their lives for the better, forever!

PROGRAM UPDATE

Although BBBS does not specifically receive PA state funding, we were, and continue to be, seriously impacted. Unfortunately, we were forced to close our High School Bigs program this school year. New match activity for our community based program was suspended in August, and we just recently began screening new volunteers and children for the first time since July. Although this has been frustrating, the patience and support of our community, volunteers, families, and the kids we serve has been inspiring. At the time of this newsletter, the budget still hasn't passed and that makes it hard to plan for the future, but we are looking forward to getting back to normal and serving more kids through the power of one-to-one mentoring.



Save the Date:
Saturday, April 23, 2016
@ Colonial Lanes

- Register your team of 4-6 people by April 8th!
- Sponsorship opportunities are available!
- All proceeds stay in Lawrence County & benefit BBBS!
- Event raises about 20% of BBBS annual budget!
- Call Allisyn at 724-654-5507 to sign up today!

Advisory Council Members

Chip Rickenbach: Chairperson

Chris Cunningham: Vice-Chair

Megan Fuchs: Vice-Chair

Tom Ford: Secretary

Don Hollerman: Treasurer

Norm Fuchs

Jay Martin

Miriam Gwin

Jane Fobes

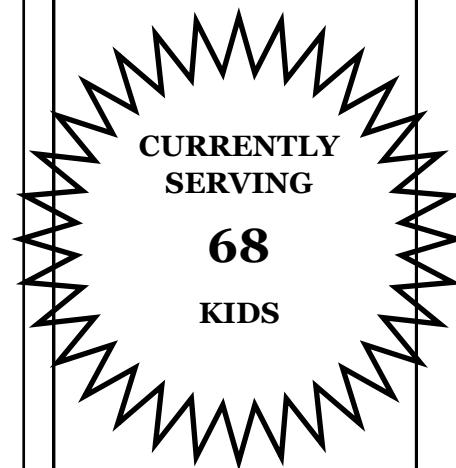
Pete Moniodes

Amy Ford

Michelle Locke

BBBS Staff

BBBS Director: Allisyn Wolfe



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, MATCHES!

7 Years: Amy & Jaimie

Bill & Paul

David & Greg

4 Years: Debbie & Kelly

Gary & Mario

Bernie & Mike

2 Years: Sara & Jayonna

1 Year: Lori & Carly

Tiffany & Haliegh

Kaitlyn & Alyssa

Valerie & India

Gabby & Jasmine

1 Year cont'd:

Sean & Issac

Brittany & Tatiaynna

Haylee & Gionna

Sarah & Mary

Tiffany & Sara

BBBS of Lawrence County does not receive state or federal funding and operates through foundation grants, individual, and corporate donations. Since 1995, we have matched over 600 at-risk youth with a caring mentor. Thank you for your support!

The Confluence



Open 8AM—5PM

MONDAY—FRIDAY

(& for special events evenings & weekends)

**214 E. Washington St.
New Castle, PA 16101**

(724) 698-7604

Free parking available at
Washington Center Plaza



www.ConfluenceCoffee.org



Cray is committed to being involved in strategies that will help strengthen our community— ultimately helping the families and children we serve. The Confluence is a place where people in New Castle can come together and build hope for a better tomorrow!

Thanks to PNC Bank Foundation: Kid's Corner Coming!

With a recent grant award from the PNC Bank Foundation, we are excited to announce that coming soon, a small children's play space will be finding a home in a corner of The Confluence! The space is being designed to be an extension of an in-school learning environment that will offer activities for children, ages birth to five, and exemplify learning through play with focus areas of math, science, the arts, and technology! A grand opening event will be announced soon and thank you, not only to PNC Bank Foundation for financial support, but to the Lawrence County Community Action Partnership's Early Learning staff for their help in designing the space! Stay tuned.



MUSIC

LIVE

EVERY THURSDAY
6-9 PM

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Did you know The Confluence seeks to offer local products as much as possible and is a proud supporter of these local partners:

- Two Fat Guys & an Oven Bakery
- Mona's Chocolates
- Sweet Chessie's Bakery
- Cialella & Carney Floral Designs
- May's Donuts
- Wholesome Foods
- Hoyt Center for the Arts
- New Castle Public Library
- New Castle News



- LCCAP's Senior Employment Program
- Office of Vocational Rehabilitation
- LC Career & Technical Center's Restaurant Trades

Thank you for your partnerships, generosity, and financial support:

- PNC Charitable Trust Foundation for a grant to Big Brothers Big Sisters
- The United Way of Lawrence County for your ongoing support of Big Brothers Big Sisters
- The Grable Foundation for a grant to Big Brothers Big Sisters & Origins
- Ecolab for a grant to Big Brothers Big Sisters
- The Margaret Henry Foundation for a grant to Big Brothers Big Sisters
- The Ellwood City United Fund for your contribution to Big Brothers Big Sisters

**YOUR
GENEROSITY
MAKES
ALL OF THIS
POSSIBLE**
THANK YOU.

VALENTINE'S DINNER @ GALLO'S

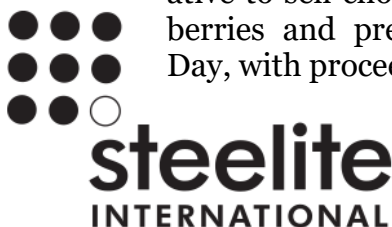


For about 14 years, the Crossroads after-school program has made a trip to Gallo's Italian Restaurant for a Valentine's Day dinner. When it began, staff had asked the kids "where's the nicest place you've been out to eat?" and the answers ranged from McDonald's to Burger King.

Since then, their annual dinner is preceded with social skills training and attention to table etiquette. Thanks to Phil Gallo and his staff for making this dinner outing so special and making Crossroads feel so welcome!

Thank You!

We are excited to connect with Steelite International, as they have 'adopted' us as their charity this year. We look forward to opportunities throughout the year to partner with them on fundraisers to benefit Cray. We thank them already for their initiative to sell chocolate covered strawberries and pretzels for Valentine's Day, with proceeds benefiting Cray.



Thank You!

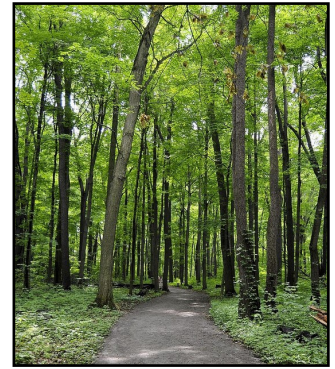
Thanks to AmeriCorps members serving at Laurel Elementary School for organizing a school supplies drive and donating more than 500 pieces to benefit the children in our programs. Thank you!!



CRAY EDUCATION CENTER

MAINTAINING THE TRAIL @ PEARSON PARK

One semester down, one semester to go at the Cray Education Center, where academics and extra curricular activities are in full swing. Students have participated in the first of two community service projects at Pearson Park in Neshannock. They have proudly 'adopted' the trail there and provide maintenance activities annually to make it a great space for exercisers. Walkers on the trail always express their gratitude to the kids for their service. There is great pride among students for this cleanup and they are looking forward to the next one this spring.



NFBD PARTNERS WITH CRAY

NFBD stands for "Never Fear Being Different" and is a local movement among young people to inspire individuality, positivity, and creativity. Led by Jordon Rooney (Union HS Grad and Westminster Grad), the program stresses the importance of being proud of who you are and embracing your uniqueness, while avoiding peer pressure. NFBD seeks to connect young mentors, like Rooney, with kids and serve as a source of support for those who feel the pressure of being different and resorting to negative behavior to fit in. "NFBD is actively looking to do workshops and programs with schools and is ecstatic to get this first opportunity by partnering with Cray. We are excited to work with the teachers and administrators of Cray. Also we are extremely excited to welcome their students to the NFBD movement!" says Rooney. Cray is also looking forward to this partnership and the added value to the school day for our students.



Pictured: Don Kemerer (Cray) & Jordon Rooney (NFBD)

NEW CLASSROOM:

NEW DIRECTIONS



In partnership with the Laurel School District, we welcome the latest addition to Cray's Education Center: 'New Directions'. This is a new classroom at the Center focused on providing more emotional support services, with a strong emphasis on life skills and academics. Students enrolled are referred by their home school districts and we are currently working with several County schools to provide this classroom.

Thank You!

LORRAINE'S HAIR SALON

A huge THANK YOU to Lori Nittinger, owner of Lorraine's Hair Salon on Moody Avenue. For several years she has been providing free haircuts on a regular basis for the students at Cray, quietly boosting their confidence. What Lori does for our Cray kids does not go unnoticed and we appreciate her generosity, talents, and willingness to share those! Thank you Lori and the team at Lorraine's!



FOSTER CARE



Cray's Foster Care Staff

Cray's Foster Care program is currently working with 28 kids, ages 9 months to 17 years old, in Mercer and Lawrence County. Our busy staff strives to maintain a balance with Children and Youth Services, our Foster Care families, doctor's appointments, school schedules, court appearances, and more— all while trying to help these 28 kids maintain some semblance of normalcy. It's a challenge— and this year, extra challenging with no support coming from the State to fund our work. Thank you to all of our Foster families who nurture and support these kids, and a very special thank you to those Foster parents who agreed to delay their financial support during the budget impasse.

In addition to kids in Foster Care homes, Cray staff is working with several kids who are awaiting long term placements (ie. adoption, guardianship, etc.) and several kids who are in line to be adopted (by their current foster homes) over the next several months. Cray is always seeking families willing to open their homes for Foster Care and/or on a shorter term basis for Respite Care (maybe a weekend or several days of care when the foster family needs a break). Can't commit to opening your home? We are also always seeking donations of underwear, socks, hygiene products, duffle bags, etc. Sometimes the only items that kids come into care with, are the clothes on their backs. This is a vulnerable population and Cray is active in helping them grow up to find success.

For more information about Foster Care/Respite Care: Sheena Carchedi, 724-654-5507.

Thank You!

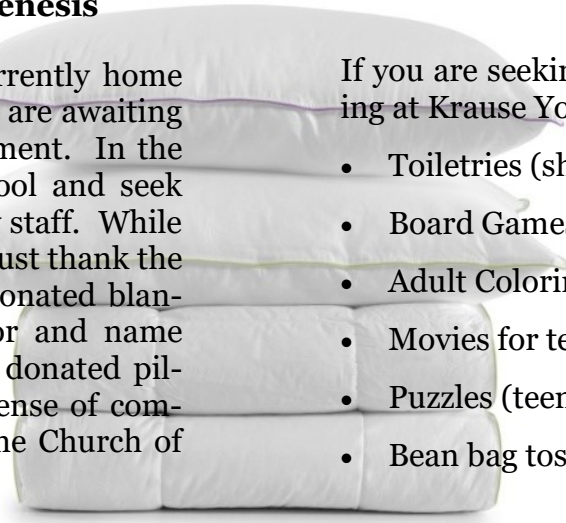
Church of Genesis

Cray's Krause Youth Center is currently home to 8 kids who cannot go home and are awaiting a foster care home or other placement. In the meantime they attend public school and seek the support of each other and Cray staff. While trying to make Krause home, we must thank the Church of Genesis who recently donated blankets with each kid's favorite color and name embroidered on them. They also donated pillows and with these items a big sense of comfort! Thank you to members at the Church of Genesis for your generosity!

Seeking Donations

If you are seeking ways to help, Cray youth staying at Krause Youth Center would really love:

- Toiletries (shampoo, deodorant, etc.)
- Board Games (for teenagers)
- Adult Coloring Books/Art Supplies
- Movies for teenagers
- Puzzles (teenagers)
- Bean bag toss games



Still want to **KNOW MORE?** Or do you want to **GET INVOLVED?**



If you'd like to get involved with one of Cray's programs or initiatives, whether through your time, talent, or treasury, please get in contact with :

Angie Urban 724-654-5507 AngieMohr-Cray@hotmail.com

Cray is always seeking volunteers— mentors, tutors, bakers, musicians... & special items for activities, school supplies, books, board games...

THANKS FOR CHRISTMAS!

ANGEL TREE GIVERS

A special thanks to employees from the following organizations who bought gifts for Cray kids over the holidays! Christmas was special this year, thanks in part to your extreme generosity!



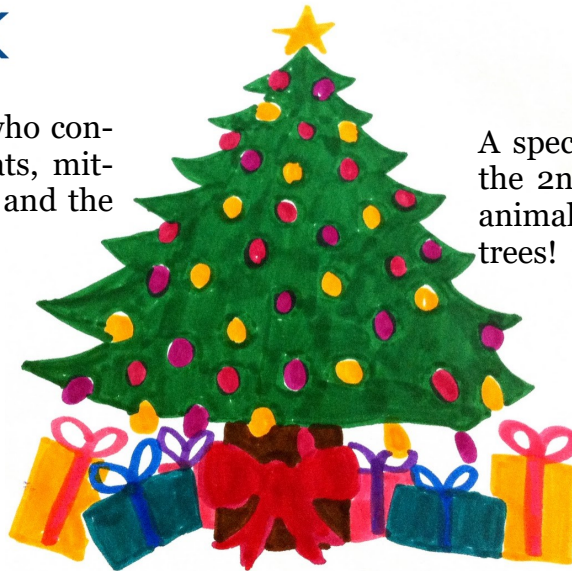
Operation Warm Coats



A special thanks to PNC Bank who connected Cray kids with coats, hats, mittens, and scarves for Christmas and the winter season!

"Thank you for the gifts. It's a wonderful thing to do and I hope that you can continue to buy for other children who don't really have the joy of being with their families or don't really get to have a Christmas!!"

-A.H.
Cray Kid



Stuffed Animals for Christmas



A special thanks to Pet Smart, who for the 2nd year in a row, donated stuffed animals for our kids to find under their trees!

"We really appreciate the generosity this holiday season! The kids received some really fabulous gifts. They are still talking about their gifts and it's February!"

-Phil Vanasco
Director of Crossroads

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS THANKS

From BBBS for:

- BBBS Advisory Board
- American Postal Worker's Union
- Clen-Moore Presbyterian Church
- Auxiliary of the United Transportation Union

For helping with wrapping:

- Highland House

From Independent Living & Krause for:

- Wampum Women's Club
- Sheetz
- Jessica Tomczyk
- Ginny Jacob

Thank you to the generous donors who reached into their pockets this season and contributed to our annual Christmas campaign. This year, more than ever, monetary gifts have helped Cray maintain the services we provide to children and families in our community. Despite the PA State budget impasse, Cray remains constant in our care for some of our community's most vulnerable population. Thank you for investing in our mission and helping us care for kids all year long!

Cray Youth and Family Services, Inc.
332 Highland Ave.
New Castle, PA 16101

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
Paid
New Castle, PA
Permit #5

Return Service Requested

BE A SUPERMAN TODAY AND HELP MAKE LIFE BETTER FOR KIDS

As Cray transforms for the future to meet the growing challenges that face kids and families in Lawrence County, we need your help! Please consider a donation to Cray.



YES, please accept my contribution of \$ _____

Please designate my contribution to assist:

_____ Big Brothers Big Sisters _____ Origins _____ Where Most Needed

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Please make checks payable to Cray Youth & Family Services

***All donations, monetary & in-kind, are tax-deductible.**

_____ **Please check here if you do NOT want your donation publicly acknowledged.**

Donations can be made online through
JustGive.org by visiting our website:

www.CrayYouth.org/donate

(credit card fees and processing charges are
deducted from gift online)

What's in your will is a testimony of what is important to you. When thinking about giving, an ultimate gift is one that will last. Please consult your attorney or tax advisor when considering your estate planning.