

**HITTING 100**



Robert Kent, who celebrates his 100th birthday today, regularly uses his telescope to explore the night sky from his home in Valencia.

TYE CYPHER/  
SPECIAL TO  
THE EAGLE

**Hikes planned Friday**

MUDDY CREEK TWP — Two state parks in Butler County are participating in a statewide push to get people outside on the first day of 2016.

Moraine State Park and the Jennings Environmental Education Center will offer First Day Hikes at 1 p.m. Friday.

At Moraine, the hike will be led by the Butler Outdoor Club, whose members traditionally take a hike in the park on the first day of the new year, said Natalie Simon, an environmental education specialist at Moraine. She said the hike begins at Moraine's bike rental parking lot on the North Shore and follows the North Country Trail for four miles.

Simon said the Moraine hike travels through areas where hunting is allowed, so clothing with bright colors and dressing in layers to accommodate the weather are recommended.

Jennings on Prospect Road off Route 528 will have a hike led by environmental education specialist Becky Lubold.

That hike will be at 1 p.m. and take participants on a two-mile trek through prairie, forest, valley and wetlands. This is the third year Jennings has offered the first day hike.

The group will meet at Jennings' prairie area and trails parking lot, Lubold said, and should return by 3 or 3:30 p.m., depending on the pace of the walk. Lubold said the trail the group will be using is easy for people who can walk two miles under current conditions.

There is no registration required for either hike.

**Valencia man celebrates a century**

By Kelly Smith  
Eagle correspondent

VALENCIA — Robert Kent has seen much in his lifetime; from flaming rivers in downtown Pittsburgh to fighting in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II to marrying in the middle of a blizzard.

But now, Kent likes to turn his attention to something a little more celestial.

Kent of Valencia celebrates his 100th birthday today.

"We know how lucky we are to still have our dad," said Lynn McIlroy, one of Kent's three daughters, who lives in the North Hills.

Sitting in his room at daughter Bobbi Bartlett's Valencia home, a computer behind him and a bookcase filled with science books and DVDs flanking the bed, Kent recalled almost a century of memories.

"There were so many things in life, it's hard to remember them all," he said.

Although he made his living as a salesman, Kent has had a lifelong interest in science and, with Bartlett, uses his telescope, which the family has dubbed "Yoda" for its squat shape, each

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Robert Kent, Valencia

night.

"My daughter and I look out this window at the moon," he said. "The other night it was the most fabulous picture you're ever going to see."

Holding a stack of DVDs, McIlroy said her father is interested in "anything having to do with astronomy and astrophysics" and instilled that love of science in his children.

Ensnared in a dark blue recliner, a harmonica and Sudoku puzzle on the end table beside him, Kent recalled his childhood as the oldest of five children on Mount Washington, where his family kept chickens in the backyard.

After high school, Kent took a job at Standard Machine and Sup-

ply on Pittsburgh's South Side. He and his brother were working there when Pittsburgh was flooded in 1936.

Looking out the window, the Kent brothers noticed the river, on fire from the flooding of a nearby gas station, swirling around the building. With part of the building already on fire, the pair had no choice but to jump. They swam to shore near the Liberty Bridge and walked up Mount Washington to home.

"That was quite an interesting excursion, I tell you," Kent said.

A framed map on the wall beside his bed traces the path of the 42nd Infantry Division of which Kent was a part. Holding a hat displaying the infantry name, Kent recalled making a Christmas tree for the men in his unit.

"I was in charge of maintenance, radios and other equipment," he said. "I cut a tree down, put little lights on it from the supply and (we used) the batteries for the radios to light the Christmas tree lights."

Kent was married to his wife, Myrle, for 72 years. The pair, who met when he asked her to teach him how to dance, eloped in 1940

in the middle of a blizzard. They went on to have four children, nine grandchildren and six great-grandchildren with one more "on the way." Myrle died in 2012.

"You can tell I had a nice family," Kent said, motioning to a shelf filled with pictures of his children, and grandchildren. "Wonderful family. Wonderful."

"He is the center of this family," McIlroy said.

In addition to an interest in science, Kent keeps busy doing Sudoku puzzles and playing the harmonica, doing a rendition of "You Are My Sunshine," that McIlroy says is the family's cell phone ring tone.

Kent listed his secrets to reaching 100: good genes (his mother's twin sister lived to 106), strong family ties, an interest in the world around him and lifelong learning and a good diet. Kent enjoys crab, seafood and corn on the cob.

The family plans to have a "one century celebration" in early January.

"We've had a good run," McIlroy said.

"That's right, a good life," Kent added.

**POTPOURRI**

**Library lists holiday hours**

SAXONBURG — The South Butler Community Library, 240 W. Main St., will be closed Thursday and Friday. Normal hours, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., will resume Saturday.

**Nutrition Basics program offered**

The Butler County Parks and Recreation Department will offer a new program, Nutrition Basics, at 6:30 p.m. Jan. 12, 19 and 26 and Feb. 2 at the park office, 184 Alameda Park Road.

Chris Fielder, owner of the LINE: Lifetime Investment in Nutrition and Exercise, will guide the course.

Each class will have a different focus. Program topics include weight loss, label reading, portion control, snacking, healthy eating and a body formula to get back on track.

To register or for more information, call 724-284-5383. There is a minimum of three participants to offer each class.

Notices of local upcoming news should be received by the Focus Department one week in advance of the event. Entries should include the name and phone number of the person providing the information and be sent to: P.O. Box 271, Butler, PA 16003, or focus@butlereagle.com.

**BULLETIN BOARD**

**TODAY**

**FREE COMMUNITY MEAL**, 5 to 6 p.m., Saint Andrews United Presbyterian Church, 201 E. Jefferson St. Use the Cliff Street entrance. Hosted by East Butler Presbyterian Church.

**NAMI FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP**, 6:30 p.m., Butler Mental Health Association, 140 N. Elm St., Suite A. For more information, call 724-431-0069.

**CARD PARTY**, 7:30 p.m., Unionville Grange, 150 N. Benbrook Road.

**AL-ANON MEETING**, 8 p.m., Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 2217 Chicora Road, Chicora.

**THURSDAY**

**CANCELED — CHRISTIAN BUSINESS PARTNERS**, Mac's Route 8 Cafe.

**CANCELED — TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY CHAPTER 1674** weigh-in and meeting, Concordia Visiting Nurses.

**CANCELED — KATIE'S KITCHEN FREE COMMUNITY MEAL**, St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

**CANCELED — GROVE CITY AMERICAN LEGION BINGO**, American Legion Post 220.

**CANCELED — TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY CHAPTER 0181** weigh-in and meeting, North Street Christian Church.

**CANCELED — AMERICAN LEGION POST 683**

**BINGO**, Saxonburg American Legion Post 683, Cabot.

**GENERAL BUTLER VAGABONDS BINGO**, early birds at 6:45 p.m., Vagabond Center, 138 Whitestown Road, Lyndora. Kitchen open. For more information, call 724-282-7695.

**CANCELED — BUTLER DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB**, B'nai Abraham Synagogue.

**AL-ANON MEETING**, 8 p.m., Grace@Calvary Lutheran Church, 123 E. Diamond St.

**FRIDAY**

**NAMI CONNECTIONS** for those with a mental illness support group, 1:30 p.m., Butler Mental Health Association, 140 N. Elm St., Suite A. For more information, call 724-431-0069.

**CANCELED — FREE COMMUNITY MEAL**, First United Methodist Church.

**CANCELED — GENERAL BUTLER VAGABONDS BINGO**, Vagabond Center, Lyndora.

**REFORMERS UNANIMOUS ADDICTION PRO-**

**GRAM**, 7 to 9 p.m., Hannahstown Road Baptist Church, 250 Hannahstown Road, Cabot. For more information, call Rodney Dickman at 724-679-3331.

Notices of local club meetings, card parties and dinners should be received by the Focus Department one week in advance of the event. Entries should include the name and phone number of the person providing the information and be sent to: Focus, Butler Eagle, P.O. Box 271, Butler, PA 16003, or focus@butlereagle.com.

**BIRTHS**

**Butler Memorial Hospital**

Born Dec. 6:

To Kim (Abels) and John Lowrey III of Butler, a son

named John Adams Lowrey IV at 7:49 p.m. Grandparents are Larry and Suzette Abels of Renfrew and Jean Lowrey of Saxonburg. Great-grandparents are Jim and Jeannine Zoeller of Valencia.

Born Dec. 11:

To Stephanie (Miller) and Pete Douglass Jr. of East Brady, a son named Case Christopher Douglass at 10:51 p.m. Grandparents are Rick and Michelle Miller of Chicora and Pete and Deb Douglass of East Brady. Great-grandparents are George Ramsey of Chicora and Arnie and Jean Davis of Cowansville.



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