

MVH CALENDAR

Monongahela Valley Hospital is sponsoring a variety of informative programs during October. Many of the events will be held in the Hospital's Anthony M. Lombardi Education Conference Center unless otherwise noted.

■ Oct. 3, Baby Care Class, 6:30 — 9:30 p.m., Mon-Vale Healthplex, Rostraver. Parents-to-be will learn baby care basics at this instructional session. Topics include: home safety, car seat safety, immunizations, breast and bottle feeding, pacifiers, bathing an infant and additional topics. For

more information, call 724-258-2229.

■ Oct. 4, Understanding Your Meal Plan, 9 — 11 a.m., Mon-Vale Healthplex, Rostraver. Builds on the education received in the Managing Your Diabetes program. Learn more about food choices, dining out, and how your eating habits affect your blood glucose control. Completion of the three-day Diabetes Self Management Training is required prior to attending this class. Registration is required at least one-week prior to the start of the class. Contact the Center for Dia-

betes at 724-258-1483 for more information and to register.

■ Oct. 5, Understanding Your Blood Sugar Readings, 9 — 11 a.m., Mon-Vale Healthplex, Rostraver. Learn how to make sense out of all those blood sugar readings you document. Understand how your diet, medications, illness, and stress affect your blood sugars. Completion of the three-day Diabetes Self Management Training is required prior to attending this class. Registration is required at least one-week prior to the start of the class. Contact the Center

for Diabetes at 724-258-1483 for more information and to register.

■ Oct. 5, Breast Cancer Support Group, 6 p.m. This support group is free and open to all breast cancer patients and their families. For more information, call 724-258-1455.

■ Oct. 6, Understanding Your Diabetes Medications, 9 — 11 a.m., Mon-Vale Healthplex, Rostraver. Gain a better understanding of how your diabetes medications work and learn the effects diabetes medications have on your

blood sugar readings. Completion of the three-day Diabetes Self Management Training is required prior to attending this class. Registration is required at least one-week prior to the start of the class. Contact the Center for Diabetes at 724-258-1483 for more information and to register.

■ Oct. 6, Stroke Support Group, 1 p.m. The Stroke Support Group is designed for patients and caregivers to share, learn and grow with people who can personally relate to the challenges and struggles they face on a daily

basis dealing with stroke and its aftereffects. For more information, call 724-258-1455.

■ Oct. 7, Apple/Fall Festival, 11 a.m. — 5 p.m. This event is sponsored by The Auxiliary of Mon-Vale Health Resources, Inc. A variety of plants — including mums, pumpkins and cornstalks — decorations, baked goods and a delicious menu is to be enjoyed in the comfort of the Anthony M. Lombardi Education Conference Center. Call the Gift Shop for more information at 724-258-1167.

Mon Valley natives honored for contributions to WVU soccer

SOCCER · FROM 1

the years that immediately followed.

"That was a great time to be involved with soccer at WVU," Rossi recalled. "The program was just getting off the ground and was, quite frankly, truly at the bottom rung of the sports ladder. It was a challenge to all of us who played. We didn't have practice uniforms or a practice facility worth mentioning. When we got our first NCAA tournament bid, we had to borrow warmup uniforms from the WVU wrestling team."

But Rossi, Shannon and their teammates persevered. "In the first eight years of soccer at West Virginia University we compiled a 67-20-4 record, not bad for a 'start-up' program," Rossi said. "We won three Southern Conference championships, received two NCAA bids and produced three All-Americans."

Shannon, a 1964 graduate of Charleroi High School, distinguished himself as a soccer player as a scholarship

player at West Virginia by being named to the All Southern Conference team in 1965 and '66 and as an All American candidate in 1966 and 1967. He was co-captain of the Mountaineers in 1967 and participated in the NCAA playoffs against Temple in 1966.

He said that during each of his junior and senior seasons (1966 and '67), the Mountaineers lost only three games and won the Southern Conference tournament. The '66 team was ranked among the top 16 in the country.

Shannon, who was inducted into the Charleroi High Soccer Hall of Fame in 1991, earned bachelor's and master's degrees in physical education from WVU in 1969 and 1971, respectively.

Rossi, a 1961 Charleroi High School graduate, initially continued his education at Point Park Business School in Pittsburgh but landed a scholarship to West Virginia University in 1964.

He was touted as an All American candidate before the 1965 campaign but the

team's slow start throttled those hopes. He finished strong, however, with nine goals in the final eight games of the regular season while playing midfield. He was the leading scorer in the school's brief history at that time and his 15 goals that season still ranks among the best in WVU history.

Rossi and goalie Charlie Toth were chosen to try out for the U.S. Olympic team later that year in Columbus, Ohio.

First taste of coaching

Rossi also received his first taste of coaching while at West Virginia.

"Our coach couldn't go to Pittsburgh with our freshman team and our varsity team wasn't playing that day, so he asked if I would make the trip and coach the team," Rossi said. "Our bus with the big WVU logo on the side stopped at Sweeney's restaurant in Rostraver Township for lunch and then we resumed the trip to Pitt Stadium. We had never defeated a Pitt team but our guys

broke that jinx by winning 1-0. Jack (Shannon) played a terrific game at fullback and was a key to the shutout."

Shannon also has fond memories of that day.

"It was my freshman season at West Virginia," he said. "Butch was our coach and we were all dressed in sports coats and ties. It didn't take much to get excited for this game against Pitt and the 1-0 victory was icing on the cake. It was a great introduction to college soccer. Butch and I still like to kid that it was one of the greatest coaching efforts of all time."

Shannon has long credited one of his WVU coaches, Greg Myers, with having a major impact on his soccer career.

"Greg coached at the col-

lege and professional levels," Shannon said. "He won a national championship at Davis and Elkins College, coached professionally and then became head soccer coach at the U.S. Naval Academy. He retired in 2005. I always admired his loyalty to his players, especially after they had graduated. Although I had three different college coaches, I always considered Greg to be my coach. I loved playing for him."

Mon Valley area soccer players also are on the 50th anniversary list of the more than 1,000 players at West Virginia University — brothers Loyal "Butch" Dean and Tom Dean, both Roscoe natives; Ed Zuraw, a Charleroi native who gained

national attention as a top pole vaulter at WVU, and Bob "Biggy" Boyd and Ben Farquhar, Monongahela High School graduates.

"Many players of that era had ties to the Mon Valley," Shannon said.

"Some played in the West Penn League, while Ben, who was an outstanding American Legion baseball player in Monongahela, had no previous soccer experience. Biggy Boyd was a soccer player at Monongahela High and Butch Dean and Jim Bartos from Bethel Park also played junior soccer in the West Penn League. All were on our NCAA tournament team at WVU, and Ben Farquhar was a three-sport letter winner at West Virginia.

Russell a super resource for Leps

RUSSELL · FROM 1

The book, which blends in quotes from coaches, players, and fans, rekindles memories for any fan of Belle Vernon or area scholastic football.

Understandably substantial detail is given to the highly successful coaching eras of Gary Dongilli (1994-2000) and Jeff Petrucci (1975-1980).

Dongilli compiled a program-best 71-11 cumulative record which was highlighted by the 1995 team winning the WPIAL Class AAA championship. The 1996 and 1999 teams also reached the title game while the 1994 and 2000 teams made semifinal showings. His teams won seven consecutive Keystone or Keystone and Big Nine conference titles.

Petrucci's teams compiled a 46-16-1 overall record, including 30-3-1 over his final three seasons with three straight Big Ten Conference titles. His 1978 and 1980 squads both achieved unbeaten regular seasons and advanced to the WPIAL Class AAA semifinals.

Bill Connors coached the Leopards to consecutive Big Nine Conference titles in 1988 and 1989 and won 47 games from 1985-1992. Jesse Cramer (2001-2005) coached Belle Vernon to its 13th and last conference (Keystone) crown in 2002. Other Leopards' head coaches include Dick Fields (1969-1974), Chuck Machesky (1981-

84), Tony Ruscitto (1993), and Lou Rood (2006-2008).

Current head coach Aaron Krepps is looking to guide Belle Vernon to a third consecutive WPIAL playoff appearance this fall and the former receiver and return specialist is one of three alumni to be a head coach in the program along with Dongilli and Rood.

Petrucci has known Russell since their college days and Russell taught at Ringgold when Petrucci began his coaching career as an assistant at Ringgold while Russell was a student teacher there. Russell was the Belle Vernon Area High School assistant principal (1976-78) and then the Bellmar Junior High principal when Petrucci guided the Leopards.

Last spring, Russell had Petrucci proof his era of the book.

"I think the world of him and he's a really good person and a great, great teacher," Petrucci said. "Steve's really good at what he does and the parts I read were very well done. It's a really neat thing that he has done."

Russell called high school football "a schools' NFL event." A lifelong resident of the Mon Valley, Russell said that personally knowing all of the BVA football head coaches is an advantage.

"High school football lends itself to the excitement of a new school year and the promise of a successful football season transfers to the entire student body," he said. "I do hope the work propels others to write the stories of other high school teams in the area."

Petrucci obviously does not

know if Russell's latest work will inspire other local writers to pen documents on their high schools but knows his efforts are effective.

He can't get involved enough in anything he does," Petrucci said. "He gets the teachers and community involved and excited in any project he does. Steve's just really a good guy."

Those wanting to purchase a copy can do so through the mail at \$10 for postage and handling with checks to the Belle Vernon Area Football Hall of Fame, 270 Crest Avenue, Belle Vernon Pa 15012.

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On the Move... for Good!

You may be at risk for bone fractures.
Join Ajay K. Mathur, M.D., a rheumatologist affiliated with Monongahela Valley Hospital, to learn about the symptoms, diagnosis and latest treatments for osteoporosis in men and women.
Wednesday, September 28 at Mon-Vale HealthPLEX
Program Begins at 6 p.m. Refreshments will be served.
This is the newest program in MVH's Innovations in Medicine Series that features physician guest speakers who provide medical information to the community.
CALL: 724-258-1333 For Reservations