Local author Nancy K Wallace’s second set of children’s theater books was published in September by ABD Publishing Inc. and some of the themes and characters may seem familiar.

**Reader’s Theater: How to Put on a Production Set 2** includes six titles that cover a year of holidays: *Groundhogs and Guinea Pigs, Fettuccine and Four Leaf Clovers, Pickles and Parks, Medals and Memorials, Ghosts and Gummy Worms, and Turkey and Takeout.*

Medals and Memorials, a Memorial Day play was inspired by local medal of honor recipient Sgt. Leslie Sabo. The dedication reads: *In Memory of Sgt. Leslie Sabo, a friend and hometown hero.* The teacher in this play is Mrs. Custer - named for Donna Custer, a teacher at Parents’ Preschool. Pickles and Parks is about a class that organizes an Earth Day Celebration. Wallace based the idea of this on Ellwood City’s annual Earth Day celebration in Ewing Park. The dedication reads: *To Lorraine Ranchod, who made Ellwood City’s Earth Day Celebration awesome!*

**Ghosts and Gummy Worms** is a Halloween play that was performed -first for the Ellwood City Public Library’s Spooktacular Halloween in 2012. It was originally called *The Mansion on Main Street.* It is dedicated to all of the theater kids at the Ellwood City Library.

Each title provides information for putting on a production. It also includes a full script that can be adapted to be readers’ theater, a skit, or a full-on play. Downloadable Teachers’ Guides provide additional tips on play-specific costumes and props and reading level information for each character.

Author Nancy Wallace has been the youth services coordinator at Ellwood City Public Library for 25 years, overseeing programming for infants through young adults. She reviews young adult literature for VOYA magazine and moderates three YA Book Discussion Groups. She is the author of nineteen children’s books. She has most recently signed a three book deal with HarperCollins Publishing.

The -first book, *“Among Wolves,”* is a fantasy (for adult readers) based on 18th-century French history is currently available as an E-book and will be available in paperback soon.
2015 Annual Meeting & Holiday Dinner Features Guest Speaker Beth Caldwell

Invitations will soon be going out for the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce’s Annual Meeting and Holiday Dinner. It’s scheduled for Monday, December 7th at the Connoquenessing Country Club. This year’s featured guest speaker is Beth Caldwell. Don’t miss the chance to hear this influential speaker, author and business success strategist as she talks about unwrapping your leadership gifts!

Beth is a columnist for the Pittsburgh Business Times newspaper and Smart Business magazine but is best known as the founder of Pittsburgh Professional Women and Leadership Academy for Women. Her books include, “I Wish I’d Known THAT! Secrets to Success in Business, Inspired Entrepreneurs, EMPOWER, INSPIRE and Smart Leadership: 12 Strategies to Help You Shift from Ineffective Boss to Brilliant Leader.

Beth is a “40 Under 40” winner, having been recognized by Pittsburgh Magazine as one of the city’s most influential young leaders and was recently recognized with the Pennsylvania Women of Courage Award. As a global instructor for the Steve Harvey Success Institute, she teaches workshops on leadership, business, and inspiration to audiences worldwide. Beth is the mom of two college age sons and the mischievous adolescent JJ Kitty. She lives and works in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Look for your invitation in the mail and RSVP to Nikki Mars by Tuesday, December 1st at 724-758-5501 or info@ellwoodchamber.org

Ellwood City United Fund

The Ellwood City United Fund uses all donations to help those in need on a LOCAL level.
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Kitchen Cabinet Brings Experience & Expertise to the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce

The Ellwood City Kitchen Cabinet, which contributes to the betterment of the local community in a variety of ways, has now joined the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce. Seeing community endeavors successfully accomplished by whomever is involved without concern for personal or group accolades has been part of the Kitchen Cabinet mantra since its inception. Earla Marshall, chairperson of the Kitchen Cabinet, stated, “Though the Kitchen Cabinet will continue to remain singular and vigilant in driving its own platform, we recognize there may be opportunities for collaboration with other organizations to move more rapidly and efficiently toward community successes.”

Founded in February of 2014, the Kitchen Cabinet grew out of Marshall’s frequent community work and many conversations with Ivor Rorquist, a long-time resident and businessman. Rorquist suggested on more than one occasion over the last decade that a citizens’ action group be formed. After exploring membership interest, Marshall and Rorquist established the Kitchen Cabinet. The name is a play on words based on the organization’s meetings around members’ kitchen tables amongst their kitchen cabinets. The name also references the concept of a Cabinet as the body of government that oversees the other branches. Earlier this year, the Cabinet became a 501c3 charitable organization.

A Mission Based on Service

The mission statement of the Kitchen Cabinet reads, "It is the mission of the Kitchen Cabinet group to lend assistance, ideas, time and talents with no political intent in order to improve the quality of life in Ellwood City and the surrounding area."

The Kitchen Cabinet gives a voice to the concerns and ideas of local residents, bringing that voice to the Borough Council and local school boards through regular attendance of each organization’s monthly meetings. One of their recent accomplishments was the reintroduction of the “Meet the Candidate” nights for local candidates so that the candidates can state their platform, address audience questions and greet those who attend the event; all in the interest of the community to educate the voters. The Kitchen Cabinet also plays an active role in providing entertainment to the downtown business district, assists with upkeep and component installations when needed at Ewing Park’s Kids’ Created Kingdom, Circle Playground and the 7th Street Parklet and volunteers on many area revitalization projects.

Success Through Cooperation

The Kitchen Cabinet prides itself on its many volunteers who have donated their time and abilities with no interest in recognition or praise. The volunteer members have worked on a variety of programs and events since its organization, often as a background participant with many people unaware of the Cabinet’s contributions.

Marshall explained, “We aren’t an ego driven group but a diverse group. We simply bring people together for the good of the community at large and we frequently work with other organizations toward a common goal. All Kitchen Cabinet members volunteer their time and talents on whatever the project and are proud to have seen all intended projects to successful fruition. A highlight was the Main Drag Derby of 2014, which brought children together to experience a soap box derby. It brought thousands of visitors to the business district to watch and experience the derby. Another was the installation of the multi-use playground piece at Circle Playground.”

For more information about the Kitchen Cabinet or to join the organization, contact Earla Marshall at 724-758-0971 or eckitchencabinet@gmail.com. You can also find the Kitchen Cabinet on Facebook.
Getting Your Business & Employees Through the Holidays With Less Stress, More Joy

Everyone is more stressed at the holidays, and that stress can carry over into the workplace. Many managers try to squash the festivities or keep their employees in line by ignoring the holidays altogether while others overcompensate. Instead, try to acknowledge the holiday without letting the holiday atmosphere turn business into a party. How? These steps can help:

Lead by Example
Don’t use work time to do your own holiday errands or your employees are likely to do the same thing. Be sure to show up on time and focus on your work. Make sure you’re being productive and focused.

Remind Everyone of Your Mission Statement
Reiterate your company’s short-term and long-term goals in an inspiring email or brief letter to your employees. Show your enthusiasm about your business' purpose – excitement about what you’re trying to achieve can be contagious and will focus that excess holiday energy appropriately.

Be Benevolent
It may be tempting to ignore the holidays, but that’s a sure pathway to increased employee dissatisfaction. You don’t need to embrace a weeks-long holiday atmosphere, but you do need to include a holiday celebration of some type, whether it’s a company luncheon or a small gift exchange. Occasional treats such as donuts and coffee during the holiday rush will yield great returns.

Reduce the Holiday Burden
If you own a seasonal business that’s particularly busy this time of year, avoid giving too much overtime to your regular staff. Consider temporary help so that your employees don’t feel too overburdened. Flexible hours will be appreciated if it’s feasible so that people can get their holiday errands done.

Praise & Thanks
The holidays are a wonderful time to reflect on your company’s accomplishments throughout the year and share those successes with your employees. Knowing that you recognize their contributions will motivate and reassure your employees. Appreciation is a great gift at the holidays!

Did You Know….?*

- This year’s holiday retail spending is expected to top $630 billion
- Retailers anticipate a 3.7% increase in retail sales over last year’s spending during the holiday spending weeks leading up to the New Year
- Retailers will hire over 700 million seasonal employees this holiday season
- The average amount spent on holiday themed merchandise and décor per family is $805
- Up to 46% of holiday shopping will be online this year, so bricks & mortar stores will need to offer there very best in terms of special deals and customer service in order to compete with Internet stores
- 77% of last year’s holiday shoppers purchased something for themselves over last year’s Black Friday weekend
- LEGO continues to out-sell video games as gifts for boys, a trend that shows no sign of changing
- One in four men put off their holiday shopping until December
- 16% of women begin their holiday shopping before September
- In 2014, over 87 million people shopped on Black Friday

*Statistics courtesy of the National Retail Federation
The Wampum Area Business Association (WABA), formed in 1997, is a relatively small business group, but it packs a lot of punch for its members due in large part to its many active members and its ability to coordinate successful events year after year. Although Wampum itself is small with a population of less than a thousand residents, the Business Association has over eighty member organizations from the town itself and the surrounding area.

Large Scale Success in a Small Town

WABA offers networking events for local members and businesses throughout the year and sponsors several community events each year, including the Wampum Car Cruise, Light Up the Town (Wampum’s version of “Light Up Night” to officially kick off the holiday season) and the Wampum Christmas Parade. The annual Car Cruise features well over 150 classic cars each year, lining Main Street with car enthusiasts and their vehicles. Vendors, merchants and entertainment are also part of the popular event that draws visitors from surrounding counties and Ohio. The Christmas Parade, coordinated by Donna Kuiken, is well known for having some of the most elaborate floats in the area as well as marching bands, dance studios and more.

Deb Sudano, WABA President, says, “WABA is unique because it is part of a small town where people are very proud of their town and work hard to make it a great community to live and work. Our members are passionate about promoting our area and keeping local businesses not just alive, but thriving and growing. Our members take great pride in making the organization a success.”

Two upcoming events for WABA include Light Up the Town on the evening of Thursday, December 3rd and the Wampum Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 5th at 1:00 pm. For more information on these events, contact WABA at 724-535-4300 or deb@wampumunderground.com.

To the Membership:

It is with great regret that I am stepping down as the Executive Director of the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce. During my tenure here, I have met hundreds of wonderful business owners, employees and community leaders. I have enjoyed every moment and am still convinced that Ellwood City, Wampum and our surrounding communities have some of the finest people and businesses anywhere.

Unfortunately, I have to step away from the demands of the Chamber so that I can focus on supporting my family through a difficult time. I will miss you all and hope that you will continue to support the Chamber. I am confident that the Board of Directors and the community will guide the Chamber in the right direction.

Please continue to participate and be a part of the Chamber’s vision for our future. It has been my privilege to work with so many of you for the past few years. I wish you all the best in the future as I turn the page and start a new chapter.

Sincerely,

Lori Hilliard
Chamber of Commerce Hosts
Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies for Two New Member
Organizations in Recent Weeks

Baked Goods & Custom Orders Available

A long-time Chamber of Commerce member, Katy’s Baked Goods, recently opened the doors of a new bakery at 429 Lawrence Avenue in Ellwood City. The new shop, at the site of Ellwood City’s former Pewee’s Hot Dogs, is now home to Katy’s Baked Goods, A1 Fudge and Custom Cakes by Jody. The Chamber hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony for the shop on Saturday, October 31st.

The shop is unique because it offers homemade delicacies from two local bakers and a local candy maker. Shoppers can buy a variety of desserts, breads, muffins and more, including a rich menu of gluten free items, or opt for handmade fudge and candy in various flavors. Custom Cakes by Jody also offers freshly baked cakes and cupcakes and takes special orders for decorated wedding, birthday and celebration cakes. For more information and bakery hours, visit http://www.katysbakedgoods.com/ or call 724-752-9047.

Local Woman Launches New Charitable Organization

Earlier in October, the Ellwood City Community Partnership opened its doors at 309 Fifth Street, Ellwood City, PA. Suzanne Bleakney, former Director of the Ellwood City Area Salvation Army office, opened EC Community Partnership in order to continue offering various charitable services to the community. The organization is already offering a wide range of services for anyone in need. To learn more, ask for assistance or learn how you can help, call 724)-971-0793.

The Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce is proud to have both of Katy’s Baked Goods and Ellwood City Community Partnership as members. We will continue to support businesses and organizations in Ellwood City, Wampum and the surrounding areas. If your business would like to learn more about becoming a member, contact us at info@ellwoodchamber.org or call 724-758-5501.
Warm Holiday Wishes for Our Members’ Continued Success in the New Year!

from the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce staff:

Lori Hilliard
Executive Director

Nikki Mars
Executive Assistant

Wishing Everyone A Happy Holiday & A Prosperous New Year!
Please Welcome Our Newest Member Businesses!

Primary Health Network
P.O. Box 716
Sharon, PA 16146
Phone: 724-758-7966
www.primary-health.net
cmiller2@primary-health.net

Ellwood City Kitchen Cabinet
200 Fountain Avenue
Ellwood City, PA 16117
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eckitchencabinet@gmail.com

Fombell Area Historical Society
1401 Route 588
Fombell, PA 16123
Phone 724-622-2665
edboot@fombellhistory.org

Venezie Sporting Goods & Apparel
512 Lawrence Avenue
Ellwood City, PA 16117
Phone: 724-758-7966
www.veneziesportinggoods.com

Smokin’ Dave’s BBQ
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Ellwood City, PA 16117
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Ann’s email: Jerseygirlann2@gmail.com
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