



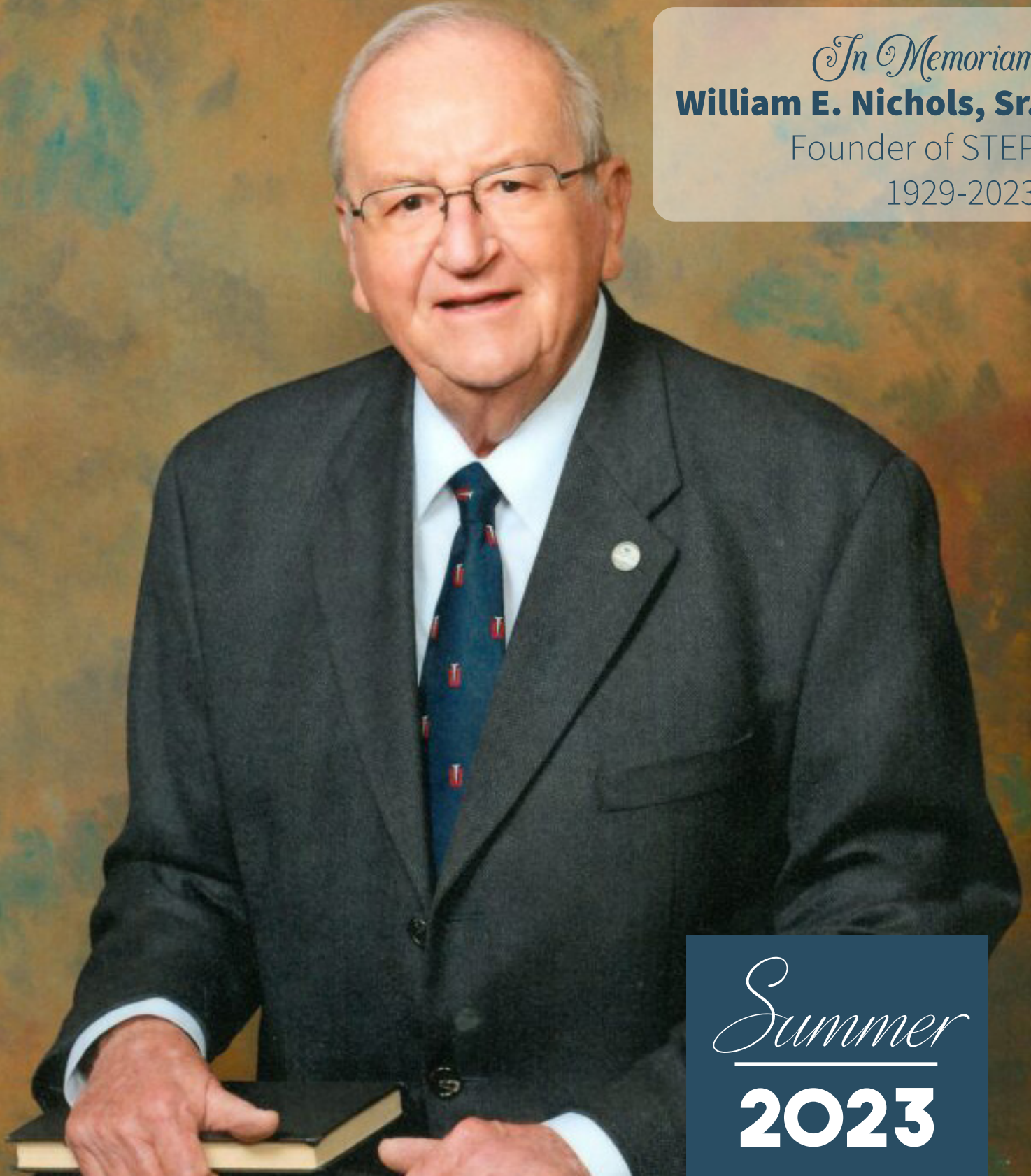
Newsletter

In Memoriam

William E. Nichols, Sr.

Founder of STEP

1929-2023



Summer
2023

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William E. Nichols, Sr.

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Star Awards

STEP recognizes its employees year-round through a peer recommendation and recognition program called the STEP Star Awards.

Employees are encouraged to submit the names of fellow coworkers who are going above and beyond to make STEP's mission and vision a reality. Employees nominated for a STEP Star Award are recognized with a personalized STEP Star certificate and a STEP Star pin. Each month a name is drawn from that month's recipients for a \$25 gift card of their choosing.



**May, June, and July
STEP Star award winners are:**

Bonnie Burget
Head Start
Classroom Aide

Robert Campen
Transportation
Driver

Jack Heitsenrether
Transportation
Driver

Kathy Moltz
Head Start
Teacher Assistant

Jamey Williams
Administration
Executive Assistant

Patrick DeHaas
Transportation
Driver

Linda Lockcuff
Head Start
Classroom Aide Floater

Aubry Soanes
Head Start
Teacher

Buffy Neese
Head Start
Health Specialist

Sally Lomison
Head Start
Center-Based Supervisor

Erica Blake
Head Start
Center-Based Supervisor

John Wardlow
Transportation
Driver



The winner of May's gift card drawing was Bonnie Burget!

The winner of June's gift card drawing was Aubry Soanes!

The winner of July's gift card drawing was John Wardlow!

JUNETEENTH

2023



Celebration attendees pose for photos

Williamsport's third annual Juneteenth celebration was held in Brandon Park on Saturday, June 17. The event, hosted by the Lycoming Tri-County NAACP in partnership with STEP, welcomed people from all walks of life to celebrate and recognize Black culture, struggle, and triumph. The day was full of unifying activities that began as a Freedom Walk from Freedom Road Cemetery and ended at Brandon Park, where local businesses and social organizations lined the area around the bandshell.



Lisa Williams, President of Lycoming Tri-County NAACP

Juneteenth commemorates the end of slavery and is a day of joy, celebration, and a recommitment to the values of freedom and building a good community for all. This year's theme was *Strengthening Our Roots to Empower Future Generations*.

"In essence, Juneteenth is a celebration of love, honoring those who came before us, and those that are yet to be born. It's also about pride in who we are and how far we (as a community) have come... so that our children can stand tall in their truth and understand they come from greatness."

Lisa Williams | President
Lycoming Tri-County NAACP



Juneteenth performers



From left: STEP employee Jessica Ray, Emily Gale, and Antoinette Dade

During the celebration, many acts shared the stage, including Loni Gamble & The Ultimates, Tamaka Carter, Felicia Suggs, Jeneen Hammond, Pastor Isaac Evans, and a Pan-African dance performance by Umoja, a group of current and former Lycoming College students. A number of honorees and scholarship winners were also celebrated during the event: STEP employee Teresa Frierson, John Powell, Eileen Hardy, Roy Baer, Robert DeJarnette, Jazmin Lee, Sofia Odoemena, Philip Tondereau, Chyanna Galagarza, Joshua Lake, and Michael Harry.



STEP Employee Teresa Frierson (right) and her daughter Alisha Coffey (left)



From left: STEP employees Denise Baney, Raelyn Jackson, and Em Reed

STEP provided many of the promotional materials for this year's event including the *Juneteenth 2023* logo, t-shirts, and program. STEP's Social Justice Task Force provided and distributed this year's Juneteenth t-shirts, the second in a series set to continue each year in commemoration of the event! The Social Justice Task Force is made up of STEP staff from various departments, many of whom were in attendance with information to share with the community, including: Early Learning Resource Center Region 7, STEP Head Start, and STEP AmeriCorps.



In Memoriam

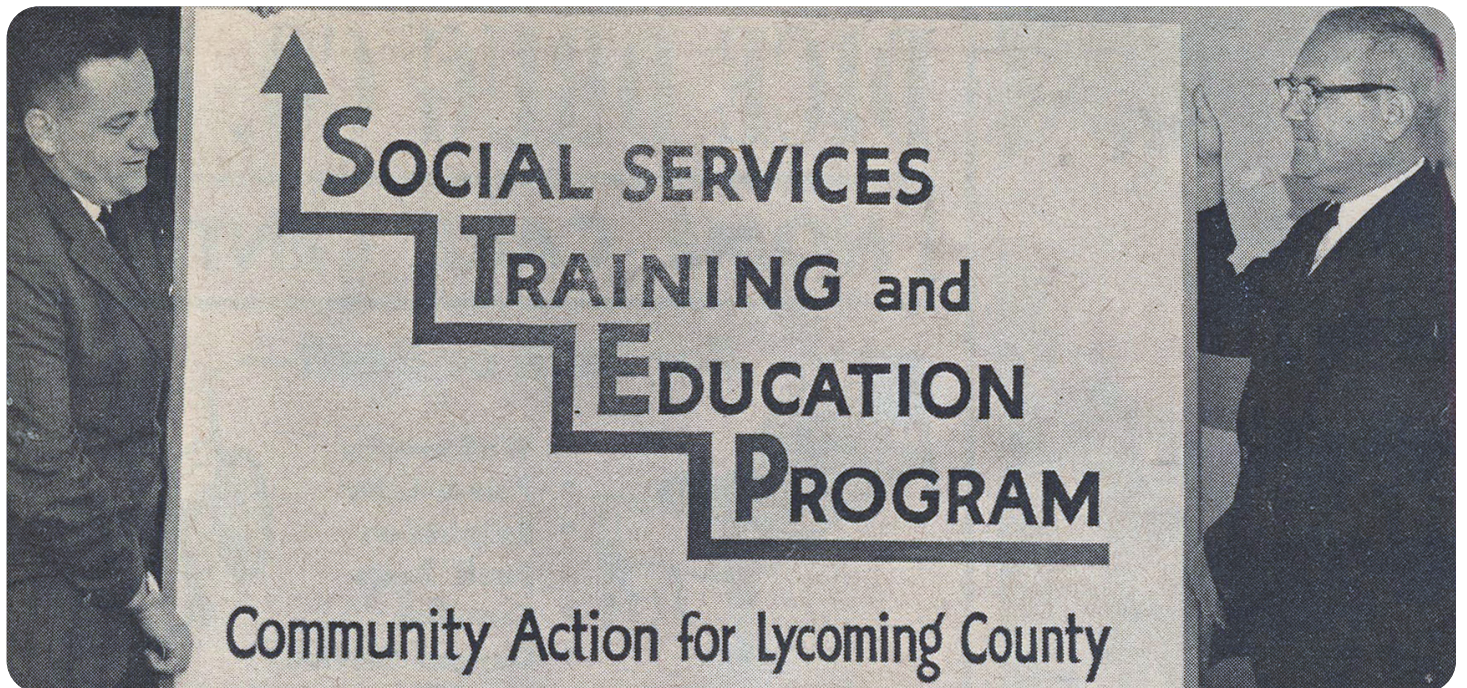
William E. Nichols, Sr.

1929-2023

William Ezra "Bill" Nichols Sr., 94, STEP founder and proud lifelong resident of Williamsport, died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family on June 4, 2023.

Bill was extremely active throughout the community, and was well known for his positive outlook, often stating "it's just another day to excel." Throughout his life. Bill tackled many projects, founded and supported countless local organizations, and always worked to better his local community.

In 1966 Bill founded Lycoming-Clinton Counties Commission for Community Action (STEP), Inc., originally "Social Services Training and Education Program," now "Success through Engagement & Partnership." Today, the Community Action Agency serves Lycoming and Clinton counties, employs over 300 people, and provides services for early learning, housing support, workforce development and employment, community collaboration, and independent living. Nichols embodied community action and its mission to positively impact people's lives through social, independence, and self-sufficiency services and programs. Due to his contributions toward founding and supporting STEP Inc., Bill received a STEP Mission Award for Outstanding Contribution in 2011.



"Because of his vision, Mr. Nichols was the catalyst for change in Lycoming and Clinton counties, and his legacy will certainly live on as we do our best carry on with his vision and mission for a better community. If you ever met Mr. Nichols, you'd know he was a wonderful man, and thought the world of STEP, its mission, its programs, and the fantastic staff and volunteers who serve. I've enjoyed countless occasions over the last many years spending time with him, learned so much from him, and he was always such a pleasure to be with. We all will miss him greatly."

- Jim Plankenhorn, STEP President & CEO

"Bill Nichols, Sr. was more than just the founding father of STEP. He was one of STEP's most ardent supporters. I had the opportunity to know Bill outside of STEP, since I was a young man and I can say his level of caring went way beyond the boundaries of STEP. The world was a much better place with him in it and his passing leaves a void that cannot be replaced."

- Dan Merk, Director of STEP Transportation

"In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., 'The difference between a dreamer and a visionary is that a dreamer has his eyes closed and a visionary has his eyes open.' Bill Nichols, Sr. not only had his eyes open, and saw what our community needed, he made that dream come true."

- Terry Roller, former STEP President & CEO

"Bill Nichols, Sr. was so proud of STEP. It wasn't because he established it - it was because he saw the importance of STEP's mission and the effect the organization has on our community. As his daughter-in-law, I feel so humbled and honored that I can play a role in continuing his legacy."

- Brenda Nichols, STEP Chairperson

SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

Veggie Vouchers

Each year STEP Office of Aging administers the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), designed to help low-income older adults access fresh, locally grown food and good nutrition while supporting local farmers in Lycoming and Clinton counties. This year saw an increase in the benefit amount, with each recipient receiving \$50 worth of Veggie Vouchers to purchase fruits and vegetables.

Drive thru distribution was offered at many of STEP's Centers for Healthy Aging throughout Clinton and Lycoming counties. The event was hugely popular, and Office of Aging staff were able to distribute all 2,600 Veggie Vouchers.

Part of STEP's Independent Living Pathway to Success, STEP Office of Aging is the local Area Agency on Aging in Lycoming and Clinton counties. Through its eight Centers for Healthy Aging and two social services offices, STEP Office of Aging provides a wide range of programs and services designed to advance the well-being of older adults and enable seniors to remain in their own homes and apartments and lead independent lifestyles. For more information on Office of Aging programs and services, call 570-323-3096 or visit www.stepcorp.org.



STEP Completes First *my muncy* Project



Thanks to the combined efforts of the First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania and STEP, you should start seeing more houses in Muncy that have received exterior improvements. Work on the first property has just been completed through the “My Muncy” initiative, a new program focusing on community appearance and environmental stewardship in the Muncy area.

My Muncy is seeking applicants for the program to continue working through this year and beyond. Eligible customers will receive assistance with improvements to property exteriors and outdoor spaces, such as exterior washing and painting, porch repairs, fence repairs, landscaping (including pruning and dead tree removal), sidewalk repair, and storm water issues.

Acceptance into the program requires an application. Eligible homeowners will receive an exterior assessment to determine the priorities for each property and ensure the needed repairs can be met with available funds. If you are interested in learning more, please contact STEP Housing at 570.601.9657.



River Valley Health Grand Opening at STEP's Clinton County Community Center



Exciting news for Clinton County residents! On June 5, 2023 a new health care option opened up at the Clinton County Community Center (CCCC) in Lock Haven. Housed within the CCCC and alongside all the services STEP offers, including Office of Aging, Transportation, Utilities, Head Start, and the Early Learning Resource Center, as well as the Hope/Bi-County WIC program, River Valley Health Lock Haven Medical is a great opportunity for people to receive quality health care without having to travel far from home.

A formal ribbon cutting event was held on August 9 during National Health Center Week to commemorate the opening of River Valley Health's first office in Clinton County and welcome the community to their state-of-the-art facility.

River Valley Health Lock Haven Medical is now taking new primary care patients and walk-ins are welcome at 124 East Walnut Street, Suite 2, Lock Haven.



Mark Your Calendar!

Medicare Open Enrollment October 15 through December 7

Medicare



Medicare open enrollment – also known as Medicare's annual election period – runs from October 15 through December 7 each year. (Although Medicare's open enrollment period ends on December 7 each year, extended enrollment opportunities are available to people in areas where FEMA declares an emergency or major disaster that hampers your ability to complete your enrollment during the normal window.)

During this annual window, Medicare plan enrollees can reevaluate their coverage – whether it's Original Medicare with supplemental drug coverage, or Medicare Advantage – and make changes or purchase new policies if they want to do so.

Call STEP Office of Aging at 570-323-3096 for more information.

STEP Transportation | New Fare Structure Effective September 1, 2023

Sponsored Transportation

Sponsorship and/or type of trip (one-way)	Fare
Medical Assistance Transportation Program-sponsored trip	\$0
Age 60-64 STEP Office of Aging-sponsored trip	Refer to Fare Chart
Age 65 + older with STEP Office of Aging-sponsored trip	\$0
Age 65 + older without STEP Office of Aging-sponsored trip	Refer to Fare Chart
Persons with Disabilities (PwD)	Refer to Fare Chart
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)	\$4.00 Copay
General Public (Full Fare) and third Party-sponsored trip	Refer to Fare Chart

Fare Chart

Mileage Zone Miles	General Public	PwD Copay	Lottery Shared-Ride (65 and older)	Age 60-64 STEP Office of Aging sponsored trip
0 to less than 5	\$21.00	\$4.00	\$3.15	\$2.00
5 to less than 10	\$23.00	\$4.00	\$3.45	\$3.00
10 to less than 15	\$29.00	\$4.35	\$4.35	\$3.50
15 to less than 25	\$34.00	\$5.10	\$5.10	\$4.00
25 to less than 35	\$52.00	\$7.80	\$7.80	\$6.00
35 +	\$75.00	\$11.25	\$11.25	\$7.00



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