

# The WEST BEND NEWS

www.westbendnews.net

VOLUME 22 – ISSUE 3

Good News for Good Communities - Serving Northwest Ohio and Northeast Indiana

MONDAY, JANUARY 19, 2026

## ANTWERP CHAMBER CELEBRATES RIBBON CUTTING FOR JUNQUE & BARNWOOD CREATIONS AND EVANGELINE STREET BOUTIQUE



Antwerp Chamber expressed its excitement at welcoming Junque & Barnwood Creations back to Main Street, noting the positive impact the business brings to the community. Those present for the ribbon cutting included, from left to right, Regan Clem and Aria Clem, owner of Evangeline Street Boutique; Jennifer Ankney, Chamber member; Jessica Stechschulte with Paulding County Economic Development; Jennifer Ramsier and Eric Gillespie, owners; Michelle Walker, Heather Matusiak, Tonya Walker, Sue Fowler and Lora Lyons, all Chamber members.



The Antwerp Chamber of Commerce officially welcomed Evangeline Street Boutique to the Antwerp business community during the ceremony and expressed enthusiasm for working together in the future. Present for that ribbon cutting were, from left to right, Lora Lyons, Sue Fowler and Heather Matusiak, Chamber members; Aria Clem, owner, with Elsi Clem and Regan Clem; Michelle Walker and Tonya Walker, chamber members; Jessica Stechschulte with Paulding County Economic Development; and Jennifer Ankney and Jennifer Ramsier, Chamber members.

The Antwerp Chamber of Commerce celebrated two local businesses with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held Monday, January 12, 2026, welcoming both a returning business and a new boutique to Main Street in downtown Antwerp.

Junque & Barnwood Creations began on South Main Street in 2018 before relocating to the corner of Road 192 and State Route 49 North in

2020. The business has now returned to town, moving into a newly renovated Main Street building owned by Jeff Cook. Junque & Barnwood Creations will share the space with Evangeline Street Boutique, bringing a complementary mix of home décor, vintage and antique “junque” and trendy fashion retail to the heart of the village.

Evangeline Street Boutique originally opened in Novem-

ber 2024 at Glenbrook Mall in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Owner Aria Clem, an Antwerp native, chose to bring her business back to her hometown, saying the opportunity to share space with Junque & Barnwood Creations was a natural fit. Evangeline Street Boutique features the latest trends in women's and teen fashion and adds another unique shopping destination to Antwerp's growing downtown business district.

The shared building, formerly the Antwerp Pharmacy, is located across the street from the H2O Water Store and represents another step forward in the continued revitalization of the downtown area.

Antwerp Chamber encourages all to support local businesses. When residents choose to shop local, they invest directly in their neighbors and in the continued vitality of downtown districts like Antwerp's. The growth of small businesses not only enhances economic stability but also fosters a sense of pride and connection that defines rural communities.

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## LATTY COMMUNITY FESTIVAL RAISES FUNDS FOR LATTY YOUTH FOUNDATION PARK IMPROVEMENTS



Pictured above are (l-r) Friends United Methodist Church representative Jane Gray, Council President Kirk Stoller, Mayor Shawn Gerber, and Darlene Knapp, Council Member and Friends UMC representative presenting the check

The Latty Youth Foundation benefitted from the Latty Community Festival last summer. Honorary Citizens at this event were Mildred and Alvin Phillips. Mildred had assisted Dorothy Chester with writing a book about the history of Latty for the Bicentennial in 1981. Since over 40 years had elapsed since the original book had been printed, copies of The Latty

History 1881-1981 were made available at the festival. Proceeds from the book sales and some donations were given to upgrade the Latty park area.

A check for \$1335.69 was given to Latty Council members at their meeting for the Latty Youth Foundation. A few remaining copies are available at the Paulding County History Museum.

### PAULDING SWCD ANNOUNCE MEETING DATES FOR 2026

The Paulding Soil & Water Conservation District has set 2026 Board Meeting dates:

Wednesday, January 14th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, February 11th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, March 11th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, April 8th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, May 13th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, June 10th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, July 8th at 8:00 a.m.

a.m.  
Wednesday, August 13th at 8:00 a.m.

Wednesday, September 9th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, October 14th at 8:00 a.m.

Tuesday, November 10th at 8:00 a.m.  
Wednesday, December 9th at 9:00 a.m.

All Meetings will be held in the Conf. Rm. at the McDonald Pike Office Building located at 451 McDonald Pike Paulding, OH 45879. All Meetings are open to the public.

Any changes will be updated on our Facebook page and website.

**Local Advertisers appreciating local news**

Antwerp Exchange Bank	7
Antwerp Insurance	4
Bridge Trailer	11
Chop Shop	12
Church Funerals Direct	2
Creative Design & Construction	1
Den Herder Funeral Home	2
Derck's Landscaping	4
Dooley Funeral Home	2
Ebel's Butcher Shop	7
Edward Jones	5
Eichers Woodworking	8
Five Star Construction	1
Friend Flooring	1
Gerbers Electric	7
Hicksville Twp Public Notice	9
Innovative Assembly HW	11
Klopfenstein Repair	4
PC Auditor 2026 Dog tag	1
PC BOE Director HW	11
PC Tax Notice CI 25 158	9
PC Veteran's Service	3
PUZZLE - CW Union Bank	9
Quality Amish Construction	3
Ron Burt Ohio Sports Blitz	8
Sauder Feeds	10
Schmucker Construction	1
Schrader Ehle	10
United Edge January Toys Auction	6

**Support local Organizations & Businesses making this issue of the West Bend News**

## Community Calendar

### TUE & WED

- Antwerp Comm. Food Pantry @ Antwerp GMC, 9a-12p

### January 19

- Paulding FOE #2405 Ladies Aux. Meeting, 7pm
- Defiance Public Library CLOSED

### January 20

- Free Expungement Presentation @ Ivy Tech North Campus, 6-7p
- Microsoft 365 Excel Training @ NSCC, Archbold, 8a-4p
- NA Meeting @ Paulding Recovery Clubhouse, 6p
- Bingo @ Children's Rm. Paulding Library, 4-5p

### January 21

- OneOhio Recovery Foundation Funding Inquiry Webinar, 10a
- PC Park District meeting @ 451 McDonald Pike, Paulding, 5:30p
- WBESC Board Meeting @ ESC Conf Rm, 5:30p

### January 22

- S.M.A.R.T. Recovery Meeting @ Paulding Recovery Clubhouse 6p
- Watercolor Snowman Painting @ Sherwood Library, 5:30p
- Craft Class w/Ms Ropers @ Oakwood Library, 5p
- Books & Coffee @ Payne Library, 1p

### January 23

- Leadership Training Workshop @ Bryan Chamber office, 8a-5p

### WYU PAULDING COUNTY'S OWN

Add your event to the calendar info@westbendnews.net

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(Cash, Check or Visa/Mastercard),  
  
OR PLEASE CHOOSE ONE  
OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS:  
  
ONLINE: [www.pauldingcountyauditor.com](http://www.pauldingcountyauditor.com)  
BY MAIL: Include self-addressed stamped envelope  
DROP BOX: Include self-addressed stamped envelope  
Located at the East Side of the Courthouse  
  
Deadline is January 31, 2026





## EVERY THING YOU WANTED TO KNOW

### Penny For Your Thoughts

By: Nancy Whitaker

So many things we think we know but don't. We are a constantly learning about things country. Today as we surf the net, I am shocked by things I did not know. In this week's Pennie's, I will tell about some things I found out that I did not know.

So did you know this: Marshmallows were once made from a plant called, of course, the marshmallow plant. Early Egyptians used the Marshmallow root for medicinal purposes. It wasn't until years later that the French played around with it and came up with the white gooey sugary fluffy candy we call marshmallows.

But, did you know animal gelatin goes into marshmallows. Bones, skin and some intestines go into commercially made marshmallows. These include parts of chicken, pigs, cows and other animal leftovers. Why? To make the collagen going into the making of marshmallows.

I don't sit and stuff myself with boughten marshmallows but they are good in hot chocolate.

It is also said that jelly beans are coated with shellac. Is this true? You tell me.

Also those delicious red tomatoes were once thought to be poisonous and were only used as decoration.

Before erasers were invented, bread was used to erase pencil marks. This is hard to believe because if you worked and baked your own bread, who would use it as an eraser.

About rabbits: those who raise these little animals probably know all about rabbits.

Did you know that a rabbit can see behind themselves without turning their heads? Maybe that's why they say that if you eat carrots like a bunny, you will have good eyesight.

A rabbit can jump and twist in the air and it's called a Binky. (4Hers Rabbit raisers...have you ever seen this?). Rabbits sleep with eyes open looking out for danger. A rabbit's heart beats twice as fast as

humans. A rabbit's hind legs are so strong they could probably kick a predator to death.

Remember this: Catching fireflies in jars was better than any video game; Getting to ride our bikes to the end of the street was like crossing the whole country; The ice cream truck could turn a street into a stampede; Losing a shoe when playing in the mud was just part of the fun; Drinking water from the garden hose tasted wonderful.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Roosters perform a dance called tidbitting to impress hens. I have never seen a rooster dance, but I have heard of The Chicken Dance. A hen can purr when they are content, similar to a cat. Some chickens enjoy sunbathing with their wings spread out. Chickens have a social hierarchy known as Pecking order.

It is always nice to know something new, but I am not a rabbit or chicken breeder; I never used bread for an eraser; never saw a rabbit do a Binky or a rooster dance for a hen.

Did you know or seen any of these things? Let me know and I'll give you a Penny For Your Thoughts.

### PEVS ADVANCES INCOME TAX LEVY FOR MAY BALLOT

The Paulding Exempted Village Schools Board of Education held its organizational and regular meetings Jan. 13 at the PEVS Administration Building, electing officers for 2026, reviewing district finances, and approving a wide range of personnel, instructional, and operational items.

During the organizational meeting, Karen Saxton was elected board president and Joe Manz was elected vice president for the 2026 calendar year. Julie Arend was appointed as the district's Ohio School Boards Association legislative liaison and student achievement liaison. The board also approved its regular meeting schedule for 2026, with meetings generally held on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m., with April and October meetings scheduled at Oak-

wood Elementary School.

At the start of the regular meeting, Superintendent Chris Etzler recognized January as School Board Recognition Month, thanking board members for their service and commitment to students, staff, and the district.

A public hearing was held on the proposed 2026-2027 school calendar. Etzler reviewed instructional hours, staff workdays, remote learning provisions, and key dates. The calendar closely mirrors the current year, with the first day of school set for Aug. 18, Christmas break beginning Dec. 21, and the last student day scheduled for May 19. Graduation is planned for May 23, maintaining the district's practice of holding commencement the weekend before Memorial Day.

Treasurer Jake Thiel presented the December financial report, noting total district cash balances of approximately \$7.9 million. Thiel reported that revenues and expenditures are tracking closely with the district's five-year forecast, with improved projections for the ending balance and continued careful management of expenses despite staffing and service-related challenges.

In his superintendent's report, Etzler reported district enrollment at approximately 1,354 students and reminded the public that applications for the Paulding Academic Hall of Fame are due Feb. 1. He also provided updates on the HVAC and lighting projects, noting that lighting upgrades are nearing completion across district buildings and that a new project manager has improved progress and on-site oversight.

The board approved several major items, including continued membership in the Ohio School Boards Association for 2026 and a resolution to proceed with placing a 0.75 percent income tax levy on the May 5, 2026 ballot. The five-year levy, if approved, would begin Jan. 1, 2027, and would be used for permanent improvements. The board also approved the purchase of Chromebooks for the 2026-2027 school year at a cost of \$112,737.50 and approved a junior high trip to Springfield and Chicago from May 13-16, 2026, at a cost of \$815 per student.

Numerous personnel actions were approved, including the retirement resignation of longtime bus driver Nancy Wilcox, effective March 20, 2026, after 26 years of service. The board also approved a number of one-year extracurricular contracts for the 2025-2026 school year covering track, baseball, softball, and music positions at both the high school and junior high levels, including volunteer coaching roles.

Additional contracts approved included a one-year limited contract for Carrie Dysinger as a three-hour bus paraprofessional and a separate one-year limited contract for Dysinger as a five-hour junior high second-shift custodian, both effective Jan. 14, 2026. A one-year limited extracurricular volunteer contract for Mel White as a high school track assistant was also approved, along with clarification of Hunter Kessler's role as a high school assistant track

volunteer.

The board concluded the meeting by entering executive session to consider the employment and compensation of public employees and officials.

### ANTWERP VILLAGE COUNCIL CONVENES 2026 WITH NEW MAYOR AND COUNCIL APPOINTMENT

The Antwerp Village Council met Wednesday, January 14, with newly appointed Mayor Brian Smith presiding following the retirement of former Mayor Jan. Under Ohio law, Smith will serve as mayor through December 31, 2027, with the position appearing on the ballot in 2027. Council was advised that a vacant sixth council seat must be filled within 30 days, or the appointment authority would fall to the mayor. Council later entered executive session to discuss the appointment and, upon returning to open session, unanimously appointed Dean Rister to fill the vacant council seat for the remainder of the term.

Council reorganized leadership for the year by electing Jason Franks as President Pro Tempore for 2026. Franks was nominated and approved unanimously following roll-call votes. Council then approved the December meeting minutes, the December financial report, and the RITA report without objection.

During recognition of visitors, Mark Greenwood addressed council regarding multiple state grants awarded under House Bill 2. Greenwood explained that a \$40,000 grant had already been used to install the new basketball court at the ball association property and that a second \$333,000 ODNR-administered grant will fund the installation of a playground as the next phase of the project. To meet grant requirements, Greenwood outlined the need for a joint use agreement between the village and the ball association, which would formalize existing public access while leaving ownership and maintenance responsibilities with the association. He noted that the agreement would require a valuation of public use, an element he is seeking guidance on. Greenwood also informed council of a third grant included in House Bill 2 for a fitness trail project at Riverside Park, which council was previously unaware of.

Administrator Brian Davis reported that the basketball court project is nearly complete and has been well received by the community. Davis also updated council on the upcoming water rate study, explaining that the study was initiated to provide data-driven justification for any future rate adjustments rather than relying on arbitrary increases. The study will compare Antwerp's rates and fees to similar Ohio communities and is expected to be completed by the end of March. Davis stated that the Paragon water contract is also up for review this year, making the study particularly timely.

Council passed an emergency ordinance extending the 2025 water rates through 2026 to avoid a lapse while the water rate study is underway. The ordinance suspends the normal three-reading rule and maintains current minimum charges and usage rates for both village and non-village customers, including home-

The deadline for the West Bend News is THURSDAYS

at 5pm for the following issue.

Send your news, ads, and classifieds to

[info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net)

Call 419-258-2000 for information or printing quotes.

### MILITARY HISTORY IN PAULDING COUNTY



By: Mark Holtsberry

Cletus Joseph Brady Sullivan was born February 21, 1896, in Payne, Ohio. He was the son of John Sullivan, born in June 1856 in Pennsylvania, and Ellen (Brady) Sullivan, born February 1858 in Ohio. John and Ellen were married February 24, 1884, in Paulding.

Council reorganized leadership for the year by electing Jason Franks as President Pro Tempore for 2026. Franks was nominated and approved unanimously following roll-call votes. Council then approved the December meeting minutes, the December financial report, and the RITA report without objection.

The couple were the parents of Michael Leo, born in 1889; Eugene C., born in 1892; Cletus, born in 1896; and Margaret, born in 1900. By 1900, the Sullivan family was living in Payne on Merrin Street. John's father, Michael Sullivan, a widower, was also living with the family, as well as Anna Sullivan, John's sister. Anna was a schoolteacher in the Payne school system and later started a dress shop in Payne.

By 1910, the Sullivan family was still living on Merrin Street in Payne. John was operating a hardware store. Anna had quit teaching and was running her dress shop. Sons Michael and Eugene were working as clerks at the hardware store, while Cletus and Margaret were attending school.

Eugene, Michael, and Cletus all registered for the World War I draft on June 5, 1917. Cletus was listed as medium

height, slender build, with blue eyes and black hair, and working as a clerk in his father's hardware store. Eugene was not selected due to being married with three children and because he was bedridden with tuberculosis. Michael was selected and served in the military.

In 1918, Eugene passed away and was buried in St. John's Cemetery outside Payne. In May 1918, Cletus reported to the United States Naval Station in Cincinnati, Ohio, and was later sent to the Naval Training Station in Newport, Rhode Island. He served there until August 30, 1918, before being transferred to the Naval Operating Base in Norfolk, Virginia, where he served until November 11, 1918. He served as a landsman in the aviation electrician and demolition corps. On December 30, 1918, Cletus completed his term of service with the Navy.

By 1920, Cletus was living with his parents on East Merrin Street in Payne and was working with his father and brother at the hardware store. On September 1, 1922, at 10:00 a.m., John Sullivan passed away and was buried in St. John's Cemetery.

By 1930, Cletus was running the hardware store in Payne and remained single. On April 14, 1934, Ellen Sullivan passed away and was buried with John and Eugene in St. John's Cemetery.

By 1940, Cletus was living at 223 North York Street in Elmhurst, Indiana, and was the owner of Sullivan Automotive Equipment Company. In 1942, Cletus registered for the World War II draft but was not selected due to his age.

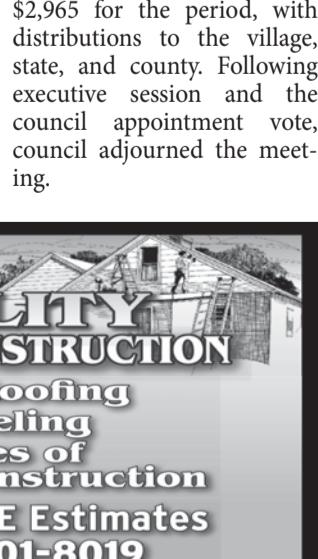
On September 1, 1949, in Oak Park, Cook County, Illinois, Cletus passed away. He was buried in St. John's Cemetery outside Payne.

...Until Next Time!

penditures.

In old business, council discussed progress on draft ordinances addressing delinquent and blighted properties. Solicitor Brandon Grigsby indicated the ordinances are still under review and recommended that enforcement be handled by a zoning or code enforcement officer rather than police. Council members discussed the possibility of combining zoning and code enforcement duties into a single part-time position to improve efficiency and accountability.

Mayor Smith reported mayor's court receipts totaling \$2,965 for the period, with distributions to the village, state, and county. Following executive session and the council appointment vote, council adjourned the meeting.



## The Paulding County Veterans' Service Office

The Paulding County Veteran's Service Office is dedicated to aiding Paulding County veterans and their families in time of need.

### There are two basic services the agency provides:

1 - EMERGENCY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - Provide short term financial assistance to eligible veterans and their families who demonstrate a need. This includes, but is not limited to, food, gas, mortgage/rent and assistance with utility payments.

2 - CLAIMS ASSISTANCE - Provide services for veterans and other claimants for help with VA claims for any federal, state, or local benefits.

We also provide reimbursement for the cost of transportation to VA medical facilities in our area, or in the case where the veteran cannot drive himself, we will provide a driver.

Our office hours are Tuesday thru Friday, 9:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Arrangements can be made for after office hours appointments.

Any questions, please call 419-399-8285

# PAULDING KofC FREE THROW WINNERS ADVANCE TO DISTRICT COMPETITION



Paulding Knights of Columbus Council #2584 held their annual Free Throw competition on Sunday, January 11th at Paulding High School. Listed below are the winners from the event and a few pictures. The winners will advance to the District Competition on Sunday, February 1st at Delphos St. John's.

## GIRLS:

Age 9 - Adrienne Arend  
Age 10 - Quynn Arend  
Age 11 - Kiersten Arend  
Age 12 - Adalyn Miller

## Age 13 - Grace McKinney

### BOYS:

Age 9 - William Arend  
Age 10 - Easton Stork  
Age 11 - Merrick Wolfe  
Age 12 - Zavier Coleman  
Age 13 - Noah Coleman  
Age 14 - Gavin Parrett

## NOUVELLE ANNEE AT THE OLD FORT: A PORTAL TO FORT WAYNE'S FRENCH COLONIAL PAST



Nouvelle Annee will take place at the Old Fort on Saturday only, January 24, 2026, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. The Old Fort will host French Colonial reenactors garrisoned at Post Miami, a French colonial outpost situated beside the great Native American Village of Kekionga of the Myaamia Nation.

Experience the military and domestic life of the early inhabitants of Fort Wayne. Observe the reenactors in recreating activities that would have occurred at Post Miami in the 1700s. The Old Fort will be bustling with activity! See the schedule below.

### Saturday Schedule

9:00 a.m. - Raising the Kings Colors and Inspection  
10:00 a.m. - Delivery of Trade Goods and Mail  
11:00 a.m. - Bayonet and Fencing Practice  
12:30 p.m. - Issue of Rations and Commandants Luncheon  
1:30 p.m. - Issue of Mail

2:00 p.m. - Games and Ladies Social  
3:30 p.m. - Native Council  
4:30 p.m. - Retiring of Kings Colors

5:00 p.m. - Grounds close to the Public

The historic ambiance of The Old Fort provides a perfect backdrop for this event. Families and history enthusiasts can explore the buildings of the fort and interact with the reenactors, civilians, and local artisans.

Admission to the event is free. Freewill donation. Historic Fort Wayne, Inc. is a nonprofit organization committed to preserving the rich heritage of Fort Wayne.

While at the event, you can also check out the new construction. Check out how you can help "Keep the Fort in Fort Wayne" oldfortwayne.org

For the latest information and any schedule changes, visit the Historic Fort Wayne Facebook page at facebook.com/HistoricFortWayne.

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Baumert, Alia Clem, Reese Franklin, Taylor Lockhart, Kati Phares, Clara Rohrs, Anabelle Saylor, Jazmine Yanez, Anneliese Zijlstra

**FRESHMEN:** Pearce Cottrell, Evan Overman

**EIGHTH GRADE:** Connor Fidler, Carson Hughes, Luke Jones, Benton Rogge, Jordan Steel, Kolton Stuckey

**SEVENTH GRADE:** Keigan Custer, Maria Isabel Isodoro, Colt Lockhart, Addyson McKay, Bradyn Miller, Lane Sensabaugh, Kennedy Zuber

**SIXTH GRADE:** Olivia Bennett, Brody Smith, Ulrik Zijlstra, June Zuber

*Honor Roll 3.49-3.0 (with no grade less than a C)*

**SENIORS:** Krystal Bradbury, Gwendolyn Carter, Raeley Franklin, Halley Hathaway, Addisen Lehman, Taylor Shull

**JUNIORS:** Lexy Hicks, Lucas Sproles, Mia Stoye

**SOPHOMORES:** Aaden Friend, Jason McKay, Kinsey Parrish

**FRESHMEN:** Brennan Barker, Gianna Laker, Brooklynn Lawson, Robert Montgomery, Emerson Morrow, Garrett Robbins, Aleta Sorrell, Bailey Traxler

**EIGHTH GRADE:** Hannah Bradbury, Bradyn Coleman, Ava Dunham, Jameson Graham, Jayde Hitzeman, Alexandros Isidoro, Cooper Nestleroad, Braelyn Putnam, Marshall Rice, Emma White, Rylan Winslow, Christopher Yanez

**SEVENTH GRADE:** Audreylynn Comer, Nora Conley, Aaron Delgado, Carson Forbes, Easton Ryan, Stella Schmidt, Edwin White

**SIXTH GRADE:** Brock Barker, Shyahna Barkley, Grace Beck-Bragg, Soren Conley, Sophia Friend, Jesstin Getz, Bennett Graham, Waylon Hounshell, Ariya Hughes, Ellie Kemerer, Layton Ladd, Oliver McCague, Harper Morrow, Zooey Mylek, Jameson Reeb, Rylee Slattman, Ava Starr, Raven Swary, Madison Wiesehan

## OAKWOOD ELEMENTARY SECOND NINE WEEKS HONOR ROLL 2025-26

### \*Denotes all A's

#### GRADE 3A:

*Mrs. Thornell* - Zack Adkins\*, Rylan Beau, Coal Etter\*, Emerson Gamble\*, Hadley Mohr, Macklen Osting\*, Bentlee Pack, Jakob Stahl\*, Cora Thomas, Jazmine Tuttle, Landen Vorlicky\*, Wyatt Zeedyk.

#### GRADE 3B:

*Miss Tressler* - Evan Blockberger\*, Axl Breckler\*, Izzy Carlisle, Hayden Chaney, Natalie Collard, Emma Elkins\*, Zane Grant, Avery Kisor, Leo Krabill, Teagen Krendl\*, Colton Lambert, Carson Parker\*, Mila Rios, Titus Tenwalde, Aiden Thomas.

#### GRADE 4A:

*Mrs. Hohlbein* - Zevy Adkins, McKenna Barnwell, Lee Bradford, Lucia Burghart\*, Cameron Manz, Kasha Manz\*, Daniel Schlatter\*, Elena Schlatter\*, Evan Taylor, Henley Wagner.

#### GRADE 4B:

*Mrs. Bockrath* - Marshall Fife, Rylie Grant, Lillian Grunden, Gwyn Krendl\*, Calla Manz\*, Carly Manz\*, Quintin Manz\*, Aspynn Shirk, Owen Steffes, Haven Wagner.

#### GRADE 5A:

*Mrs. Limber* - Luke Collard\*, Jade Fraley, Ryleigh Girod, Maverick Jewell, Jaxon

Phone: 419-258-2000 • Email: [info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net)

## SHE KNOWS BUT SHE AIN'T TELLIN'

One of the most famous things in Grabill history, every now and then someone mentions it, in event that was hurt around the world, even Hitler talked about it.

I believe it was January 1932, a train hit a car at the crossing and killed 12 people in the car. Many people wondered if it could have been murder, suicide. They had no food in their home, but he stopped to get a bit of candy for the kids at the gas station. They were at his sister's house in Fort Wayne that day for a good meal. But there was a blinding snowstorm the entire day, the tracks are on a nasty grade, and there was a depot on a south side of the road and was impossible to see the train coming.

There was a man from our church killed years ago, and people wondered if it might have been suicide. When they put the Cedarville dam in they took nearly his entire farm. Beautiful sandy soil. This was at the crossing north of Grabill. It's a nasty crossing and to this day there is a crossing without a gate. A train going south is behind you. Probably 160° angle. A bit more than a normal 90. So he could have simply not seen the train. There are many things we will simply will not have an answer.

The 12 people that were killed in one accident are buried in the Odd Fellows



Cemetery in New Haven. A couple years ago I had another man decided he'd like to see that mass grave. Turns out it is a huge cemetery and we couldn't find a grave, but by that time we really didn't care. We did find a couple hundred other people that also had a story to tell.

But we also found there is an angel watching over them, it knows all of their stories, but she ain't tellin'. She knows everybody's stories, be they good, or bad but she simply ain't tellin'. There are many things in this life that we will simply not know. And maybe that ain't all bad.

It's a good thing that we don't know the future. If we knew we were going to die tomorrow what would we do. It's simply best that we don't know. It really does no good to worry cuz it just makes worse. We can't rely on plans, because we have no idea what the future holds.

—James Neuhouser

Ryder Dotson, Audrey Etter\*, Osiris Feliciano Rosas, Wyatt Leatherman, Trevor Manz\*, Tierney Tenwalde.

#### GRADE 6B

*Mr. Ellerbrock* - Angel Aburto, Alex Burghart, Saulivin Cano, Zoey Chaney, Molly Halter\*, Kennedy Manz\*, Brielle Schlatter\*, Josh Schlatter\*



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## DERCK'S LANDSCAPING SUPPLIES

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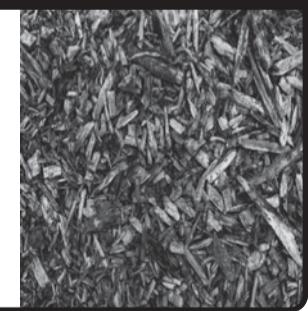
Antwerp, Ohio 45813

419-506-1902

### MULCH COLORS:

Red, Brown and Black  
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Responses need to be received by Thursdays at 5:00 p.m. for the following publication. We reserve all rights to edit as needed.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### What a Deal!

Well it has been a year since Trump has been president for a second term. I know for many of you it's been an awful year. Since last year you have had to deal with your TDS mental condition. Well, I have good news for you. I am here to help. Here is how I can relieve you of your misery and get back at Trump, show him you mean business and once and for all show him you are

finally going to get even with him. So here is my idea:

All you have to do is start immediately, keeping track of all new income you receive from anything Trump had done since he took office. Keep track of all money at the gas stations, keep track of all the money you save at the grocery store. Did your taxes go down? Are you taking home more pay? Did your 401K increase? Any and all increases in your income, in any way, in 2025.

Now here is how you can really get back at Trump. Show him you are not going to keep any of it. Because Trump was responsible for your increase, you don't want it. Then sit down and write me a check for the total you came up with each and every month. I will be glad to help you get rid of it and you are bound to feel better.

That's just the kind of guy I am. Besides, I feel you owe me because you probably voted for Joe Biden and I had to pay all those high gas prices, grocery costs and higher interest rates. Shoot, you may have also voted for Carter...those were even worse years. Boy did we all have to suffer.

So, now that 2026 has arrived, all you Democrats and "never Trumpers" get out your check books and get mental relief in 2026 by sending me all those checks. It's a dirty job, but I'll help you all. Just think you'll feel better. I know I'll feel better...Win! Win!

Oh, to show just what kind of guy I am, I won't keep any of the money, that wouldn't be right. So each month, I will total it all up and send it to one of my favorite charities: St. Judes, Shriners, T2T, Wounded Warriors or any

charity of your choice. Boy, I'm looking forward to checking my mail every day. Start those checks coming and keep them coming.

—Dave Laukhuf  
Paulding, OH

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Why Vote

Voting, one government for the people by the people! We have the privilege and rights to vote for people in office and issues that affect us in every way including financially.

The other day a friend asked if I had gotten my property tax papers yet and told me what I would find on them. Got them, and besides the ridiculous amount that our properties are appraised at, there was a street light Levy, that had been voted down, shoved on us without our consent. Why is there something like this needed, isn't this included in our utility costs or by the power companies that service these and gouge us with prices?

Voting is simple, people vote for or against an issue. If enough vote yes it becomes active, if more vote no that should be the end of it. So obviously voting means nothing in Paulding, we just waste our time doing it.

Growing up we were taught and learned that No meant don't do it, stop doing it and don't try doing it. Where is all this money going to after the deductions of all the little things it supports? Obviously not where it's needed. Why doesn't some of it go to whatever this street light stuff is about?

Talking to a friend about this, and like he said, give people too much power and it's abused. They just ignore the people who put them in office and do what they want. I know that they will say they have to pay it too but will probably vote themselves a raise so really the taxpayers are paying their taxes.

A while back, some friends went through Paulding on their way to Bryan, and asked me why don't they fix the roads and streets. What to tell them? That supposedly there is no money for it, though we have been paying for years and it's been years since anything was done?

A few weeks ago a person had a great letter about grants available for projects in towns and why doesn't this town use them? From what I hear Antwerp is doing all sorts of great things with grant money. Guess here they want to say

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Subscription information for the West Bend News follows: If you would like to have the West Bend News newspaper delivered to your home, subscriptions are \$62.00 per year. The newspapers are available for free at pickup locations throughout Northeast Indiana and Northwest Ohio.

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we did it all by ourselves by making taxpayers pay for everything then brag about how great they are running the town.

A lot of us wish we could give ourselves raises whenever we want but we can't. We are at the mercy of the government, allowing us a certain amount or working harder for a little more. Especially this hits the retired person even more.

Yes, I got a raise on my monthly check of \$35 a month, BUT my medical insurance went up, yes, \$35 so I'm back at square one and that wouldn't even cover this levy shoved on us.

Now I see they want us to vote on another levy that failed, something for the school. I've been told they have a very large reserve for this, why don't they use it? Are they going to shove it on us after it fails again? SO WHY DO WE VOTE if it doesn't count unless it's positive?

And these property taxes, where are they getting these appraisal figures on our properties? No way I could sell where I live for what they say it's worth, not in the West end and not in Paulding! I suppose they brought in some flunkies from Columbus like I heard they did the last time to do drive by appraisals and compare us to that overpriced and overblown city.

It's too bad the people in this town are not thought of first to help us live better and be able to afford more, but obviously, keep them poor is the idea. I'd hate to die owing something to the town, they would probably go to the funeral home, lay your body on the rug and sell your coffin to pay taxes!

Next voting time maybe vote no on every issue, don't vote for a single person on the ballot unless they have positive attitudes that won't cost us more. Lots of people are saying, we need new blood in our government type positions. Progressive Paulding? But look at the empty buildings lots where businesses were. Antwerp sounds like it's progressing as it should, why can't Paulding, without stressing the taxpayers like it is doing? So much for this. Thanks to the West Bend News for letting us voice our opinions.

—Gregg Gorman,  
Paulding, OH

## NEW TAX LAWS FOR 2026 THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

The new year brings more than resolutions and fresh starts; it also usher in several tax changes that could affect your wallet. Whether you're saving for retirement, funding your child's education or supporting your favorite charity, here's a few things you need to know about the tax landscape in 2026.

More room to save for retirement and healthcare. There's good news for savers: Contribution limits for retirement accounts are going up. If you're under 50, you can now contribute up to \$7,500 to an IRA, which is up from \$7,000 in 2025. Those 50 and older can contribute an additional \$1,100, for a total of \$8,600.

The limits for 401(k), 403(b) and governmental 457(b) plans are also increasing, with workers younger than 50 able to defer up to \$24,500. Visit IRS.gov and search "401k limit increases" for an article outlining the details.

Health savings account limits are rising too. In 2026, individual coverage increased to \$4,400 and family coverage to \$8,750. If you are age 55 or older and are not enrolled in Medicare, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 as a catch-up contribution.

The start of the year is an ideal time to review your contributions and consider increasing them, even by small amounts which can add up over time.

A catch-up rule for high earners. If you're 50 or older and earned more than \$150,000 last year, there's a new wrinkle in your retirement planning. You can still make catch-up contributions to your workplace retirement plan, but they must now be Roth contributions rather than traditional pre-tax contributions. This includes 401(k), 403(b) and 457(b) plans.

While you won't get an immediate tax break, Roth contributions offer tax-free income in retirement and can provide a tax-free legacy for your heirs.

Expanded benefits for 529 education plans. Families using 529 plans to cover K-12 expenses will see the annual federal distribution limit double from \$10,000 to \$20,000.

per student. The definition of qualifying expenses has also expanded to include curriculum, books, certain tutoring expenses and testing fees.

This change provides more flexibility for families with overfunded plans and increases options for managing education costs across multiple children or beneficiaries.

New charitable giving provisions. The rules around charitable deductions are shifting in two directions. Taxpayers who take the standard deduction can now deduct up to \$1,000 in cash donations (\$2,000 for joint filers) to qualified organizations.

However, those who itemize deductions face a new threshold: only charitable contributions exceeding 0.5% of adjusted gross income are now deductible. Donors may want to consider bunching strategies or using donor-advised funds to maximize their tax benefits.

Getting help. Navigating these tax changes can be challenging, but you don't have to go it them alone. A qualified financial advisor and tax professional can help you understand how these and other changes affect your specific situation. Together, you can develop strategies to make the most of new opportunities while minimizing your tax burden.

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## WAYNE TRACE PULLS AWAY AFTER HALFTIME TO DEFEAT HICKSVILLE AT THE PALACE



Jocelyn Baldwin, Aces Sophomore, drives in and shoots to score in the third quarter! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)



Stealing the ball again enables Wayne Trace senior Careen Winans to add to more points to the Raider scoreboard! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)

Wayne Trace used a strong third quarter to pull away from Hicksville for a 49-30

girls basketball victory on Wednesday night, January 15, at The Palace at Wayne Trace.

The Raiders edged Hicksville 11-10 after the opening quarter and extended the lead to 25-16 by halftime following a solid second-quarter effort. Wayne Trace then took control coming out of the break, outscoring the Aces 20-4 in the third quarter to build a commanding advantage.

Hicksville showed resilience in the fourth quarter, matching Wayne Trace with 10 points, but the Raiders' earlier surge proved too much to overcome as they closed out the win.

Careen Winans led Wayne Trace with 17 points, including four three-pointers, while Lexi Moore added 14 points and was active on the glass. Caroline Winans contributed 12 points, giving the Raiders three players in double figures as Wayne Trace improved to 11-3 overall and 2-2 in the Green Meadows Conference.

Hicksville was led by Kennedy Adams and Devony Mull, who each scored 10 points. Jocelyn Baldwin added six points for the Aces, who fell to 8-7 overall and 1-3 in GMC play.

Wayne Trace's defensive effort in the third quarter proved decisive, allowing the Raiders to protect their home court and secure the conference victory.

### PAULDING PULLS AWAY LATE TO TOP LIBERTY CENTER

Paulding used balanced scoring and a dominant defensive effort to pull away in the second half and secure a 73-51 road victory over Liberty Center on Saturday night, January 10. The win improved Paulding to 8-3 on the season, while Liberty Center slipped to 5-3.

The Paulding Panthers set the tone offensively by shooting 62.5 percent from the field and an efficient 57.1 percent from three-point range. Paulding also made 15 of 20 free throws and controlled the paint, holding Liberty Center to just 32.7 percent shooting overall.

Gannon Parrett led the Panthers with 24 points on 8-of-11 shooting, knocking down three three-pointers and adding nine rebounds. Javon Stiltner followed with 13 points and six rebounds, while Grady Barton chipped in 11 points and Xander Kuckuck added 10. Blake Rhonehouse contributed eight points and Jordan Manz added four, as Paulding's depth continued to wear down the hosts.

Defensively, Paulding limited Liberty Center's scoring opportunities and won the rebounding battle, 25-22. The Panthers also recorded 12 assists and forced key turnovers that led to transition points during a decisive second-half stretch.

Liberty Center struggled to find consistency on offense, hitting just 9 of 29 shots from beyond the arc. Despite strong efforts on the boards and 14 assists, the Liberty Center Tigers were unable to keep pace once Paulding extended the margin.

Paulding's combination of efficient shooting, rebounding control, and defensive pressure proved too much down the stretch, as the Panthers pulled away to earn a convincing Northwest Conference road win.

### PAULDING PULLS AWAY FROM BLUFFTON FOR WIN AT THE JUNGLE

PAULDING — Paulding built an early lead and steadily extended it Saturday night, rolling to a 64-42 victory over Bluffton in a girls basketball matchup at The Jungle on January 9.

The Panthers set the tone in the opening quarter, jumping out to an 18-9 advantage, and continued to apply pressure before halftime with a 15-4 second quarter to take a commanding 33-13 lead into the break. Paulding maintained control in the second half, outscoring Bluffton 19-15 in the third quarter and closing out the game with a 12-14 fourth period.

Tori Schlatter led Paulding with 15 points, scoring consistently inside while also knocking down three free throws. Estie Pease added 11 points, including three three-pointers, while Kayleigh Dunham and Anya Mead each finished with 11 points. Addison Pease contributed eight points, and Kate Manz chipped in five as the Panthers showcased balanced scoring throughout the lineup.

Bluffton was led by Greta Myers, who scored 15 points to pace the Pirates. Macy Schaadt added nine points, while Maelee Miller finished with six. Despite a stronger offensive showing in the second half, Bluffton was unable to overcome Paulding's early surge.

Paulding finished the night with 18 field goals, five three-pointers, and 13 made free throws, using depth and steady offense to secure the home win.

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## EDGERTON CONTROLS TEMPO IN ROAD WIN OVER ANTWERP AT THE RANGE



Edgerton Senior Alivia Farnham comes in on top of her game with another 2 points to help with Bulldog win. More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)



Antwerp senior Miley Jewell gets sneaks in this beautiful shot to add two points to the Archer score! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)

Edgerton used balanced scoring and steady defense to earn a 40-23 Green Meadows

Conference girls basketball victory over Antwerp High School on Wednesday night, January 15, at The Range.

The Bulldogs set the tone early, taking an 11-4 lead after the first quarter as Antwerp struggled to find its rhythm offensively. Both teams traded baskets in the second quarter, but Edgerton maintained control and carried an 18-11 advantage into halftime.

Coming out of the break, Edgerton delivered its strongest stretch of the night, outscoring the Archers 14-7 in the third quarter to open up a double-digit margin. Antwerp continued to battle defensively, but the Bulldogs limited scoring opportunities in the fourth quarter to close out the conference win.

Katilyn Burke and Alivia Farnham led Edgerton with 13 points apiece, combining inside scoring with perimeter shooting. Elle Huard added seven points, while Ava Swank

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chipped in five as Edgerton improved to 11-4 overall and 4-0 in GMC play.

Antwerp was led by Aliyah Friend with seven points, followed by Gabi Snyder with six. Clara Rohrs added four points for the Archers, who fell to 5-

11 overall and 1-3 in the conference.

Edgerton remained unbeaten in league play with the road victory, while Antwerp will look to regroup as GMC action continues.

## PANTHERS PULL AWAY LATE TO DEFEAT ANTWERP IN GMC CLASH



It's the battle of the Rhonehouses as Weston attempts to block senior Blake's shot. Despite the attempt, points were good for Paulding. More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)



Antwerp junior Weston Rhonehouse sinks a 3 point basket from the far places in the Jungle with Paulding junior Max Daeger attempting to guard. More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)

Paulding used a strong opening quarter and a dominant finish to pull away for a 71-49 boys basketball win over Antwerp on Friday night, January 9, in a Green Meadows Conference matchup at Paulding.

The Panthers jumped out quickly, scoring 23 points in the first quarter to take control early. Antwerp responded with its best stretch in the second quarter, pouring in 20 points behind steady outside shooting and aggressive drives, but Paulding still carried a 37-34 advantage into halftime.

After the break, the Panthers tightened up defensively, holding Antwerp to just six points in the third quarter while gradually extending the lead. Paulding then put the game out of reach in the fourth quarter, erupting for 23 points to close out the conference victory.

Xander Kuckuck led Paulding with 21 points, consistently attacking the basket and finishing through contact. Blake Rhonehouse added 16 points, while Gannon Garrett contributed 12 points from the free-throw

line. Tyson Manz chipped in 11 points, giving Paulding four players in double figures as the Panthers improved to 8-3 overall and 2-0 in the GMC.

Antwerp was led by Zaine McMichael, who finished with 18 points, including five three-pointers. Brayden Fuller added eight points, and Weston Rhonehouse scored six for the Archers, who dropped to 2-9 overall and 0-2 in conference play.

In the junior varsity contest, Paulding defeated Antwerp 50-35.

### JAY COUNTY ADVANCES PAST WOODLAN IN ACAC TOURNAMENT OPENER

Jay County opened ACAC boys basketball tournament play with a convincing 65-29 victory over Woodlan in the first round on January 13 at Jay County High School.

The Patriots set the tone early, building a 20-7 lead after the first quarter and extending the margin to 37-11 by halftime. Jay County's defensive pressure limited Woodlan's scoring opportunities, while the Patriots converted consistently on the offensive end to take control of the game.

Jay County continued to pull away in the second half, outscoring Woodlan 15-13 in the third quarter and 13-5 in the fourth to close out the win.

The Patriots finished with balanced scoring and strong rebounding, keeping Woodlan from mounting any sustained runs.

Woodlan was led by Keegan Brodax with 10 points, while Jake Swoveland added five. The Warriors struggled

to find rhythm offensively against Jay County's defense and were unable to close the gap after halftime.

With the win, Jay County advanced to the next round of the ACAC tournament, while Woodlan's tournament run came to an end in the opening round.

### ANTWERP WRESTLING CLUB HAS GREAT OPENING WEEKEND

The Antwerp wrestling club opened their season at the Wayne Trace Duals on Sunday, February 11, 2026. 22 young archers participated in what is the start of a 7-week campaign of wrestling tournaments in the annual GMC tournament series.

Antwerp was very well prepared for the tournament, finishing 2nd as a team overall with 18 of the 22 young archer wrestlers winning at least one match on the day. Even more impressive were 3 wrestlers who went undefeated on the day. Phelix Slattman, Riley Slattman, and Oliver McCague were all perfect for the tournament. Congratulations on the great start to the season. We all can't wait to see you next week at Fairview. Good luck and GO ARCHERS!!

### PAULDING DOMINATES EARLY, ROLLS PAST EDON

Paulding wasted little time setting the tone on its home floor, erupting for 32 first-quarter points on the way to a 75-34 girls basketball victory over Edon on January 12 at The Jungle. The Panthers improved to 12-1 on the season with the

decisive GMC win.

Paulding's fast start put Edon on its heels immediately, as the Panthers built a commanding 32-8 lead after one quarter. Edon settled in during the second period, but Paulding still carried a 46-20 advantage into half-time behind strong defensive pressure and efficient shooting.

The Panthers continued to pull away in the third quarter, outscoring Edon 19-7 to remove any doubt. Paulding closed out the game with a balanced fourth quarter, showcasing its depth as multiple players contributed to the scoring effort.

Tori Schlatter led Paulding with 18 points, while Estie Pease added 14 and Kate Manz finished with 12.

Anya Mead chipped in nine points and Kayleigh Dunham scored eight as the Panthers placed 10 players in the scoring column.

Edon was led by Adison Briner with 14 points and Nevaeh Smith with 11, but the Bombers struggled to keep pace after Paulding's explosive opening quarter.

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# THE LEFT TURN



World of Outlaws will return to Attica Raceway Park twice in 2026. Action Photos Ohio.

## By: Ron Burt

The 41st Tulsa Shootout started the new year of racing nationally and featured top drivers across the U. S. and other countries racing Micro non-winged and winged cars. Six different classes of cars compete. The goal is to win and take home one of the coveted Golden Driller Trophies and the first place money. The week-long event takes place at the SageNet Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma with drivers of all ages. It's a warm-up for many drivers who stay in Tulsa and compete in the Chili Bowl Nationals this week for the Midgets.

Daison Pursley has accomplished a lot in his career. He's USAC NOS Energy Drink Midget National Champion, 4-Crown Nationals Champion, and a winner in High Limit Series, the one trophy that has eluded him is the Golden Driller, but that changed last Saturday night with a win in the Outlaw A-Feature at the 41st annual Tulsa Shootout. Pursley was able to lead all 30 laps, it wasn't easy and he had a big challenge. The 2024 Outlaw winner, Kyle Larson clawed his way into contention from the sixth starting spot. Getting the run on Pursley on Lap 26, the pair made slight contact battling through the third and fourth turns. Recovering and giving chase, the next set of turns saw Larson shoot sideways and save it, but not before dropping to fourth. Allowing Jeffrey Newell and Steven Snyder Jr. to run past, the pair were in a dogfight with Snyder slipping by on Lap 28. Having moved up from 12th, time was running out on Pursley and his slim lead. At the checkered flag he only had a 0.755-second lead. Over the week of elimination races 292 drivers.

A few other tidbits from USAC announced Kody Swanson won't compete in the USAC Silver Crown Series this summer. Kody tops the all-time win list and has been hired by USAC to serve in a new role as USAC Silver Crown series director during the 2026 season. He will race this summer just not in the Silver Crown Series.

Locally Attica Raceway Park will open their 2026 season Friday, March 16th with a full show featuring Winged 410 Sprints, 305 Winged Sprints and the UMP Dirt Late Models. Friday, May 1st, the World of Outlaws make their first appearance of 2026 at Attica and they return Tuesday July

the shootout. A bit of drama took place. After the finish of A-Class feature event, Frank Flud was declared the winner after post-race tech revealed the engine and parts in the transmission to be illegal in the No. 4 driven by Jett Yantis. Issues discovered in post-race tech included: Illegal head work, with bowl porting over a quarter inch past the valve seats. Epoxy on cylinder head imperfections inside the intake port. Ceramic bearings in the transmission. This was the second time in event history that a Golden Driller trophy has been stripped from the on-track winner due to a rule's infraction, the win is Flud's first in A-Class and puts his Golden Driller count to six in Tulsa Shootout competition. California's Braxton Vasconcellos came away with his first career Golden Driller in Restricted competition. The same race NASCAR current Champion, Kyle Larson, watched his son Owen place 4th. Jonathan Beason from nearby Broken Arrow Oklahoma won his 3rd Golden Driller in the non-wing class. He controlled all 55 laps of his feature.

Locally Attica Raceway Park will open their 2026 season Friday, March 16th with a full show featuring Winged 410 Sprints, 305 Winged Sprints and the UMP Dirt Late Models. Friday, May 1st, the World of Outlaws make their first appearance of 2026 at Attica and they return Tuesday July

14th, competing for \$20,000.00 to win the Brad Doty Classic and a tune-up before the Kings Royal at Eldora. Until next week, keep your wheels down. Ron Out!

## PAULDING BOYS PLACE FOUR AT CHARLIE MOORE INVITATIONAL



Landon Dasher

READING — Four members of the Paulding boys varsity team competed at the Charlie Moore Invitational on January 10, and all four athletes earned podium finishes in the meet.



Avery Cooper

Landon Dasher and Avery Cooper each captured first-place finishes in their respective events, leading the strong showing for Paulding. Stroker Etter followed closely with a second-place finish, while Nico Moreno rounded out the day with a third-place performance.

With every competitor placing, the Panthers turned

in an impressive and efficient outing at the invitational.

## SPRING 2026 CLASSES NOW BEGINNING AT YOUR VAN WERT CAMPUS



VAN WERT, Ohio — Northwest State Community College is thrilled to announce that the long-awaited Van Wert Campus is now open for business! Spring semester classes are beginning at our newly renovated campus starting on January 12, 2026.

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Northwest State's mission statement is "To serve by providing access to excellent and affordable education, training, and services that will improve the lives of individuals and strengthen communities". We believe the Van Wert Campus helps us further that mission, and in turn, would like to invite you to tour the facility on Tuesday mornings from 10-11am, Thursday afternoons from 1-2pm, or by appointment for groups.

Questions can be directed via email to [vanwert@northweststate.edu](mailto:vanwert@northweststate.edu) or by calling 419-267-1399.

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## RAIDERS EDGES PILOTS

AYERSVILLE — Wayne Trace held off a strong second-half push by Ayersville to secure a 50-47 road win in Green Meadows Conference boys basketball action on January 9.

The teams were deadlocked early, tied 4-4 after the first quarter, and remained even at halftime with each side scoring 16 points in the second period. Wayne Trace gained separation in the fourth quarter, outscoring Ayersville 19-11 to seal the three-point victory.

Tanner Laukhuf led Wayne

Trace with a game-high 17 points, shooting efficiently from both inside and beyond the arc while also adding four assists and three rebounds. Lance Maenle added 12 points, including a three-pointer, while Caden Sinn chipped in eight points. Zach Stoller contributed five points and pulled down a team-high 11 defensive rebounds to anchor the Raiders on the glass.

Wayne Trace finished the night shooting 19-of-39 from the field, including 4-of-14 from three-point range, and went 8-of-13 at the free-throw line. The Raiders also held a rebounding edge, collecting 28 total boards.

Ayersville was led by Jeremiah Peake and Dane Ewers, who each scored 21 points. Peake knocked down three three-pointers and was perfect at the foul line, while Ewers did most of his damage inside, shooting 9-of-12 on two-point attempts. Despite the balanced scoring, the Pilots struggled from long range, hitting 4-of-18 from beyond the arc.

The Pilots shot 18-of-52 overall and went 7-of-10 at the line, but Wayne Trace's late-game execution proved decisive.

In the junior varsity contest, Ayersville edged Wayne Trace, 38-37.

Wayne Trace improved to 5-5 overall and 1-1 in GMC play, while Ayersville slipped to 6-5 overall and 1-1 in the conference.

## PAULDING COUNTY COURT RECORDS

### Criminal/Traffic Disposition Report

Dalton J. Johnson of Grover Hill, Ohio, was found

guilty of theft. He was ordered to pay \$315 in fines and costs, with 90 days in jail suspended. Johnson must maintain general good behavior, pay \$17.99 in restitution, and have no contact with the Oakwood Market.

**Joshua L. Sukup** of Paulding, Ohio, was found guilty of a stop sign violation. He was fined \$55 and ordered to pay \$95 in court costs.

**Paige A. Delarber** of Defiance, Ohio, was found guilty of failure to control. She was fined \$70 and ordered to pay \$95 in court costs.

**Tiffini E. Aldrich** of Antwerp, Ohio, was charged with disorderly conduct.

**David L. Fisher** of Antwerp, Ohio, was found guilty of failing to confine a dog and was fined \$25 plus \$87 in court costs.

**William M. Hicks** of Paulding, Ohio, pleaded no contest and was found guilty of disorderly conduct. He was fined \$75 and assessed \$114 in court costs. He was ordered to maintain general good behavior.

**Hunter J. Dobbelaere** of Oakwood, Ohio, had an open container charge dismissed with court costs assessed. He was found guilty of reckless operation and fined \$250, with an additional \$105 in court costs.

Ayersville was led by Jeremiah Peake and Dane Ewers, who each scored 21 points. Peake knocked down three three-pointers and was perfect at the foul line, while Ewers did most of his damage inside, shooting 9-of-12 on two-point attempts. Despite the balanced scoring, the Pilots struggled from long range, hitting 4-of-18 from beyond the arc.

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In the junior varsity contest, Ayersville edged Wayne Trace, 38-37.

Wayne Trace improved to 5-5 overall and 1-1 in GMC play, while Ayersville slipped to 6-5 overall and 1-1 in the conference.

**Melissa G. Coutinho** of Findlay, Ohio, also pleaded guilty to failure to control. She received a fine of \$70 and was assessed \$95 in court costs. Her case was waived as well.

**Ramon A. Blanco** of Fort Wayne, IN, was found guilty of possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia. He was

## GOOD NEWS FOR GOOD COMMUNITIES

Good news still matters—especially locally.

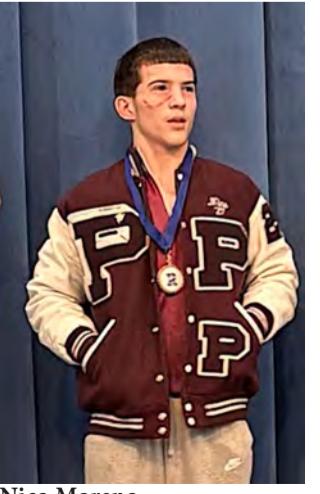
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Stroker Etter



Nico Moreno



## HIGH SCHOOL Men & Women's Basketball SCORES & MORE 20 Conferences: 9:30 & 10:30PM

Ohio Sport Blitz Facebook Live with Ron Burt

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# MAIN ST BRIDGE 601 CLOSURE IN NEW HAVEN PER ALLEN COUNTY HWY DEPT. JAN. 26 - NOV. 30, 2026

## Main St Bridge 601 Replacement



Google Earth

Beginning on or after January 26, 2026, Main St will be closed through November 30, 2026, for a superstructure bridge 601 replacement through Allen County Highway Department. See attached map. For questions please contact Allen County Highway Department at 260-749-7369.

## DEFIANCE COUNTY FURNITURE BANK AWARDED \$1,000 GRANT FOR BEDS



Pictured with the grant are (L to R) Chelsie Schroeder - DAF Marketing Director and Dennis Gable - DCFB Development Coordinator.

Congratulations to Defiance County Furniture Bank (DCFB) for receiving a \$1,000 grant during the Defiance Area Foundation's (DAF) fall grant cycle. This grant money

is being used to purchase new beds and bed frames. In the last 12 months over 250 mattresses and bed frames were distributed in Defiance County to those who qualify.

fined \$50 for each offense, with an additional \$97 in court costs, and all contraband was ordered forfeited or destroyed by the arresting agency. Blanco also pleaded guilty to driving without a license and was fined \$100 plus \$97 in costs. A warrant and warrant block were recalled in relation to the case.

**Kyle R. Hogan** of Fort Wayne, IN, was found guilty of driving under suspension and fined \$150 with \$97 in costs. The court ordered that the forfeiture be held until payment is made in full.

**Courtney J. Hime** of Antwerp, OH, had a disorderly conduct charge dismissed with prejudice. The state waived all court costs.

**Dravon C. Potts** of Oakwood, OH, was found guilty of assault. He was fined \$100 with \$380 in court costs, sentenced to 180 days in jail with 97 days suspended, and placed on standard probation. He was ordered to complete a "Keeping It in Check" class, and a jury trial previously scheduled was vacated.

**Michael J. Camp** of Millington, Michigan, was found guilty of operating a vehicle under the influence (OVI/under influence). He was fined \$565, sentenced to 180 days in jail with 177 days suspended, and his license was suspended from July 4, 2025, to July 4, 2026. A second charge for marked lanes was dismissed.

**Eric S. Garza** of Paulding, Ohio, was found guilty of OVI/under the influence. He was fined \$565, sentenced to

180 days in jail with all 180 days suspended, and his license was suspended from January 12, 2026, to January 12, 2027. The court allowed the installation of an ignition interlock device (IID) and potential early removal of the device and shortened suspension after six months. Four additional charges—OVI refusal, driving under an FRA suspension, registration violation, and headlight violation—were all dismissed.

**Hunter F. Bauer** of Paulding, Ohio, was found guilty of failure to control and fined \$70 with \$95 in court costs.

**Heather D. Strickling** of Oakwood, Ohio was found guilty of assured clear distance. She was fined \$70, ordered to pay \$97 in court cost and had to show proof of insurance by January 15, 2026

**Fatimah J. Hudson** of Detroit, Michigan, pleaded guilty to operating a vehicle without a license. She was fined \$100 and ordered to pay \$97 in court costs.

**Alina M. Grassel** of Luna Pier, Michigan, was found guilty of a seat belt violation. She was fined \$30 with \$57 in court costs.

**Carmen A. Bodenbough** of Cecil, Ohio, was found guilty of driving while texting. She was fined \$150 and assessed \$95 in court costs.

**Casey R. Helms** of Payne, Ohio, was found guilty of driving left of center. The case was waived by the defendant, and he was ordered to pay a \$55 fine and \$95 in court costs.

### 2 VEHICLE INJURY CRASH ON US 224 & LINCOLN HIGHWAY

On January 12, 2026, at approximately 3:44 P.M., the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Van Wert Post troopers were dispatched to a two-vehicle crash at the intersection of US 224 and Lincoln Highway, in Van Wert County.

A 2010 Toyota Prius, driven by Gary Reidenbach, age 69 of Convoy was traveling westbound on Lincoln Highway. A 2007 Ford F150, driven by Daniel Baker, age 29, of Nappanee Indiana was traveling westbound on US 224. The Toyota Prius failed to yield to a stop sign and was struck by the Ford F150. The Toyota Prius came to rest in

the roadway, and the Ford F150 came to rest off the west side of the roadway in the ditch.

The driver of the Ford F150 was transported by Van Wert City EMS to Ohio Health Van Wert, with suspected minor injuries. The driver of the Prius was not injured in the crash.

The Highway Patrol was assisted on scene by the Van Wert County Sheriff's Office, Van Wert City Fire, Van Wert City EMS, 2 A's Auto Sales LLC, and Knippens Jeep Dodge Ram.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol reminds all motorist to always stop at stop signs and check for traffic before entering an intersection. The crash remains under investigation.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT STILL NEEDED FOR PAULDING VETERANS MEMORIAL

The Paulding County Area Foundation is asking the community to continue coming together to help finish a very meaningful project — the Paulding Veterans Memorial.

This memorial is being built to honor the brave men and women from our area who have served our country. When completed, it will be a place where families can gather, veterans can be recognized, and future generations can learn the importance of service and sacrifice. The memorial will include flags for each branch of service, engraved granite panels with veterans' names, memorial benches, and special sculptures honoring those who served.

#### Fundraising Progress

With the generosity of local individuals, families, businesses, and organizations, approximately \$198,000 has already been raised toward the \$300,000 needed to complete the memorial. That means about \$102,000 is still needed to bring this project to completion.

Every donation helps — whether it's a small gift or a larger contribution — and all support goes directly toward construction and completion of the memorial.

#### How You Can Help

There are a couple of simple ways to support the Veterans Memorial:

- Make a Donation by Mail

Donations may be mailed to: Paulding County Area Foundation

101 E. Perry Street  
Paulding, OH 45879

(Please write "Veterans Memorial" in the memo line.)

- Purchase a Commemorative Granite Panel

- Families can honor a veteran by purchasing an engraved name as part of the memorial. This is a lasting way to recognize a loved one's service and ensure their name is remembered for years to come. Limited slots available.

- Forms can be found at: Paulding VFW Post, Paulding County Veterans Service Office, Paulding County Area Foundation or at Kauser Trucking.

- Mail the completed order form and \$200 payment to:

John Paulding VFW Post

#587

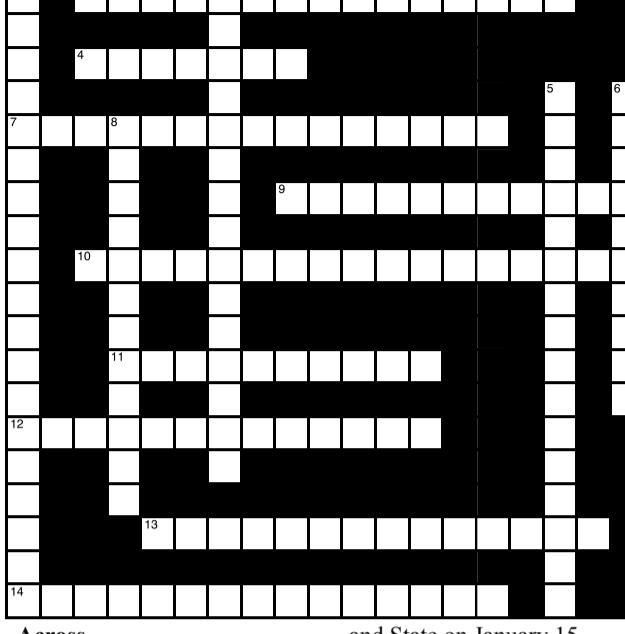
Attn: Post Commander  
214 North Water Street  
Paulding, Ohio 45879

#### A Memorial Built by the Community

The Paulding Veterans Memorial is truly a commu-

## WEST BEND NEWS CROSSWORD PUZZLE

### REMEMBERING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR



#### Across

- King played a key role in the passage of this act which was a win for African Americans.
- King attended the Crozer Theological Seminary in THIS city in Pennsylvania.
- King was named THIS by Time magazine in 1963.
- King's iconic phrase given during a speech delivered during the March on Washington in 1963.
- This event took place on August 28, 1963, led by MLK.
- King was tragically assassinated on this date in Memphis, Tennessee.
- King was inspired by THIS public figure with his philosophy of nonviolence.
- King was born in this City

solution on page 11

THIS PUZZLE BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Your Local Bank in Paulding  
103 South Main St. • Paulding, OH 45879

419.567.1075

### NOTICE OF ON-LINE SALE UNDER JUDGMENT OF DISCLOSURE OF LIENS FOR DELINQUENT LAND TAXES

Revised Code, Section 5721.19.1

### IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS PAULDING COUNTY, OHIO

In the Matter of Foreclosure of Liens for delinquent land taxes:

LOU ANN WANNEMACHER, TREASURER  
PAULDING COUNTY, OHIO, Plaintiff,

vs.

CLARENCE J. TURNER, ET AL., Defendants,

Case No. CI 25 158

Whereas, judgment has been rendered against certain parcels of real property for taxes, assessments, penalties, costs and charges as follows:

Plum Street, Cecil (4 parcels)  
Parcel Number: 15-02S-011-00; 15-02S-010-00; 15-01S-017-00; and, 15-01S-024-00

A full legal description of this property is on record at the Paulding County Recorder's Office located in the Courthouse.

The opening bid is Five Thousand Five Hundred Fourteen and 61/100 (\$5,514.61) Dollars, sufficient to cover pro-rated taxes, assessments, penalties, costs and charges of this suit.

Whereas, said judgment orders such real property to be sold by the undersigned to satisfy the total amount of said judgment;

Now, therefore, public notice is hereby given that I, Jason K. Landers, Sheriff, Paulding County, Ohio, will sell such real property at public auction to the highest bidder of an amount sufficient to satisfy the judgment against each parcel on Thursday, January 29, 2026 by on-line bidding at:

(RealAuction) <https://paulding.sheriffsaleauction.ohio.gov>. Registration and a Ten and No/100 (\$10.00) deposit must be completed at least one week before the date of the sale.

If this parcel does not receive a sufficient bid, it shall be offered for sale on-line, under the same terms and conditions of the first sale on February 12, 2026 for the same minimum bid.

Bidding begins on scheduled Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. An auction will be conducted for each individual property/court case. After a property is sold, the next scheduled sale will begin.

The purchaser will be required to pay recording costs and transfer fee with the balance of the purchase price after the sale has been confirmed.

Purchaser(s) are advised they have no legal right to access this property until the Sheriff's Deed has been filed with the Paulding County Recorder's Office.

PUBLIC NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ALL SUCH REAL PROPERTY TO BE SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION MAY BE SUBJECT TO A FEDERAL TAX LIEN THAT MAY NOT BE EXTINGUISHED BY THE SALE, AND PURCHASERS OF ANY SUCH REAL PROPERTY ARE URGED TO SEARCH THE FEDERAL TAX LIEN INDEX THAT IS KEPT BY THE COUNTY RECORDER TO DETERMINE IF NOTICE OF A FEDERAL TAX LIEN HAS BEEN FILED WITH RESPECT TO ANY SUCH REAL PROPERTY.

Sheriff Jason K. Landers

Paulding County, Ohio

[www.pauldingohiosheriff.com](http://www.pauldingohiosheriff.com)

Joseph R. Burkard, Prosecuting Attorney

## PUBLIC NOTICE

2025 Annual Financial Reports are completed for Hicksville Township and available for review at the Office. For 2026, Township Trustee Meetings will be held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM. Any changes in the scheduled meeting time or any special meeting times will be posted at the Township Building at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

—Stephanie Metz,  
Hicksville Township  
Fiscal Officer

## STATE REPRESENTATIVE KLOPFENSTEIN SPEAKS TO KIWANIS



Pictured above are David Burtch, Kiwanis member and OH State Representative Roy Klopfenstein.

The Kiwanis Club welcomed State Representative, Roy Klopfenstein as a guest speaker at its meeting this week. Klopfenstein attended at the invitation of Kiwanis member Dave Burtch.

During the meeting, Klopfenstein provided an update on current issues facing the State, with a primary focus on recent property tax increases. He also discussed the ongoing conversations at the state level regarding property

tax relief and offering insight into where those discussions currently stand.

Kiwanis members appreciated the opportunity to hear directly about these important topics and their potential impact on local communities.

The Kiwanis Club continues its mission of community engagement by hosting speakers who provide timely and relevant information on issues affecting residents and local organizations.

### DONATION ALLOWS PEPPERBALL LAUNCHER PURCHASE BY THE PAULDING COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT



Pictured above are Paulding County Sheriff Jason Landers and VFW Post #587 Life Member Keith West.

John Paulding VFW Post#587 donated \$4,000 to the Paulding County Sheriff's Department that will be used for the purchase of four PepperBall launchers. This new equipment provides officers with an additional, versatile less-lethal option designed to safely de-escalate volatile situations and ensure compliance while minimizing the risk of serious injury.

### PAULDING ELEM. SCHOOL SECOND NINE WEEKS HONOR ROLL 2025-26

\*Denotes all "A's"

#### THIRD GRADE:

Mrs. Doster - \*Tobias Bolter, Logan Crossland, Eli Hernandez, Rhett Iliff, Kyrie Jack, Valentina Tellez Munoz, Audrina Vance

Mrs. Agler - \*Hendrix Carlisle, \*Ilah Zimmerman,

Bayne Dasher, Essie Deel, Ayra Dunakin, Kenley Miller, Declan Pittman, Harper Snyder

Mrs. Rohl - \*Maddock Wolfe, William Arend, Mason Eddy, Aliyana Fitch, Vincent Grinnell, Kyra Mead

#### FOURTH GRADE:

Mrs. Miles - \*Quynn Arend, \*Lute Gross, \*Gwen LaBoe, \*Cole Manget, \*Aubrey Manz, \*Edison Manz, \*Kaylee Powell, Dilan

Calixto-Gutierrez, Rayna Carpenter, Meela Jones

Miss Jimenez - \*Elizabeth Chapman, \*Nora Rosalez, \*Sophia Spangler, \*Hudson Stork, \*Marshall Wilhelm, \*Rowan Witkouski, Gabby Andrews, Mervin Font, Isaiah Hopkins, Carl Kosch, Rylee Sexton-Scott

Mr. Harder - \*Da'lonnie Banks, \*Adeline Brown, \*Mason Horner, \*Natalie Mericle, \*Trent Reinhart, \*Emma Sue Walz, \*Everett Wilhelm, Ellie Branch, Mattison Clevinger, Ryker Johnson, Payton Schroeder, Chance Turner

#### FIFTH GRADE:

Mr. Beckman - Mariana Adams, Allison Ball, Maleek Barnes, Boston Foltz, Dulce Galeana Monterrubio, Ella Hale, Ranger Helms-Grubb, Kolby Ringler, Emma Steingass, Lilly Thomas

Mrs. Stoller - \*Evelyn Dangler, \*Abigail Leal, Natalee Bittinger, Tate Dotson, Miracle Eustler, Gavin Hankinson, Tino Martinez, Ellie Niemasz, Glen Smith, Libby Sprow, Ashlynn Vance

Mrs. Richards - \*Nora Gochenour, \*Jesse Hull, \*Harlow Kipfer, Caydius Dobbelaere, Kenan Foltz, Landyn Harshman, Kami Muhlenkamp, Jayden Perfecto, Brayden Ramirez Cortes, Madison Salisbury, Jacob Shaffer, Merrick Wolfe, Lincoln Worman

### ELISABETH JOHNSTON EARNS FALL SEMESTER DEAN'S LIST RECOGNITION AT OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Elisabeth Johnston of Oakwood, OH, has been named to the 2025 fall semester Dean's List at Ohio Wesleyan University.

To earn Dean's List recognition, Ohio Wesleyan students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or better on a 4.0 scale in all applicable classes.

Learn more about enrolling at Ohio Wesleyan at [www.owu.edu/admission](http://www.owu.edu/admission).

Founded in 1842, Ohio Wesleyan University is one of the nation's premier liberal arts universities. Located in Delaware, Ohio, the private university offers more than 70 undergraduate majors and competes in 24 NCAA Division III varsity sports. Through its signature program, The OWU Connection, Ohio Wesleyan teaches students to integrate knowledge across disciplines, build a diverse and global perspective, and apply knowledge in real-world settings. Ohio Wesleyan is featured in the book "Colleges That Change Lives" and included on the U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review "Best Colleges" lists. Connect with OWU expert interview sources at [www.owu.edu/experts](http://www.owu.edu/experts) or learn more at [www.owu.edu](http://www.owu.edu).

The PepperBall system utilizes a compressed-air launcher to fire projectiles filled with PAVA (a synthetic pepper irritant) powder, similar to what is used in traditional pepper spray. This system is effective at a greater range than other non-lethal tools, allowing officers to maintain a safe distance during a dynamic incident.

The Finance, Policy, and Personnel Committees of the Defiance Public Library System (DPLS) Board of Trustees will meet on Wednesday, Jan. 21, at Defiance Public Library, 320 Fort St., Defiance, OH.

The Finance Committee will meet at 4 p.m., the Policy Committee will meet at 4:30 p.m., and the Personnel Committee will meet at 5 p.m.

Meetings of the DPLS board and its committees are open to the public.

### PATROL INVESTIGATING SERIOUS INJURY PEDESTRIAN CRASH

The Van Wert Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol is investigating a serious injury pedestrian crash that occurred on January 7th at 06:36 p.m. in Emerald Twp., Paulding County on County Road 115, near State Route 111.

The preliminary investigation revealed that a 2014 Nissan Murano, driven by Jacob Andrews, 24 of Paulding was traveling south bound on County Road 115, at the same time a pedestrian, Larry Dix, 54 of Paulding was crossing County Road 115 walking east to west. Mr. Dix was struck by Mr. Andrews as he crossed the center yellow line of the roadway. Mr. Dix was wearing dark

Attendees will hear a brief summary of the long history of slavery in North America.

## WT GROVER HILL ANNOUNCES JANUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Pictured above (l-r, front row): Emma Harris, Quincy Merriman, Karlee Reichert, Natalie Heier, Tessa Stoller, Kaylee Stoller, Josie Proctor, and Wyatt Spencer; (back row, l-r) Brody Boyer, Kyndra Grimes, Allison Donaldson, Sloane Sinn and Gabe Schlatter. Not pictured: Abram Flint, Chloe Harris, Nathaniel Andrist, and Clara Porter.

### PAULDING HS ANNOUNCES NOVEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



November Students of the Month for PHS are: From L to R: Freshman: Jonah Anders; Sophomore: Carly Font; Junior: Kayleigh Dunham; Senior: Mallory Fisher

### PAULDING HS ANNOUNCES DECEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



December Students of the Month for Paulding High School are: From L to R: Freshman: Ivan Martinez; Sophomore: Ava Leatherman; Junior: Landon Dasher; Senior: Tessa Metcalf

clothing with no reflective material at the time of crash.

Mr. Dix was transported from the scene by Paulding EMS, to Paulding Hospital where he was later life flighted to Parkview Regional Medical Center in Fort Wayne with life-threatening injuries. Mr. Andrews did not suffer any injuries as a result of the crash and was wearing his seatbelt at

the time of the incident.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol was assisted on scene by the Paulding County Sheriff's Office, Paulding Fire and EMS and Gideon's Towing.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol reminds motorists to always wear their seatbelt and to never drive distracted.

The crash remains under investigation.

*The deadline for the West Bend News is Thursdays at 5pm for the following issue. Send your news, ads, and classifieds to [info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net). West Bend Printing & Publishing - 419-258-2000*



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# UNLEASH CREATIVITY AT BUILD IT: BIG BLUE BLOCKS!



Express your creativity and test your engineering skills. Science Central's next temporary exhibition, Build It: Big Blue Blocks! opened Saturday, Jan. 17.

This exhibition features large, lightweight blocks that come in a variety of shapes – bricks, cylinders, chutes, channels, and more.

Build It: Big Blue Blocks! gives visitors the chance to make extra-large structures, explore their imagination, invent games, and more.

This exhibition is an open-ended experience, featuring building prompts offering visitors an inspirational nudge.

Build It: Big Blue Blocks! is suitable for ages 3 and up, making it a fun experience for the whole family.

The exhibition also fea-

tures a section with blocks shaped like dinosaur bones, inviting visitors to make their very own prehistoric creatures and pretend to be paleontologists.

Build It: Big Blue Blocks! was conceived and designed by award-winning architect David Rockwell, who was inspired by watching his own children play. His firm has been internationally recognized for its broad array of projects, from restaurants to stage sets, hotels to historic restorations, and art programming to interactive design.

Build It: Big Blue Blocks! will be located in Science Central's Temporary Exhibitions Gallery. Entry is included with general admission. The exhibition will run through May 24, 2026.

Division was dispatched to 241 Ruth Ann Drive for a reported structure fire. The call to the Defiance County Sheriff's Office 911 Communication Center was at 04:12:03.

The initial caller was from a nearby residence at the end of the cul-de-sac. Defiance Fire and Rescue Division was assigned at 04:12:44 with an initial arrival time of 04:18:40. In addition to Defiance Fire and Rescue Division personnel, automatic mutual aid was requested from Noble Township Fire Department, South Richland Fire Department, and Highland Township Fire Department at 04:14:03. A Defiance Police officer on scene before fire crews' arrival attempted to alert occupants. The officer was evaluated for smoke inhalation at a local hospital.

## STRUCTURE FIRE AT 241 RUTH ANN DRIVE, DEFIANCE OHIO 43512

On January 13th, 2026, the Defiance Fire and Rescue

## HELP WANTED:

Innovative Assembly Services, LLC  
109 Victory Lane, Antwerp, OH 45813  
Phone: 419-399-3886

Email: InnovativeAssemblySvcs@outlook.com

Family owned business located in Antwerp, Ohio looking for general labor associates to do light manufacturing and assembly. Will provide on the job training. Hours are Monday-Friday from 5:00 am-1:30 pm. Competitive wages, vacation and personal leave after probationary period.

To apply contact us via phone or email

## HELP WANTED

### PC BOARD OF ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

The Paulding County Board of Elections is currently seeking to fill the position of Director. Applicants for this full-time position must be a registered Republican with an active 2-year voter history, resident of Paulding County, pass a background check, and have a minimum of a high school diploma or GED. Excellent leadership, dependability, flexibility, organizational and people skills are a must. Candidates must understand Microsoft applications, the ability to learn software, and understand and follow the State of Ohio election guidelines. This full-time position pays an hourly wage of \$24.88 and includes optional county-provided health insurance and OPERS pension. Any interested applicants can check the Paulding County Board of Elections website for a job description. Email, mail, or drop off in person a resume to:

[paulding@ohiosos.gov](mailto:paulding@ohiosos.gov)

Paulding County Board of Elections • 105 E Perry St., Paulding OH 45879

PC BOE is an Equal Opportunity Employer

## Classified Ads

### Sell it in the Classifieds!

Classified ads are \$8.50 for 20 words or less

and \$.15 for each additional word.

**Bold is \$1.00 additional.**

Ph: (419) 258-2000 • Email: [info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net)

P.O. Box 1008, Antwerp, OH 45813

**Classifieds MUST be paid up front!!**

**FOR SALE: Bullmastiff Weimaraner Mix, \$50. 4 boys, 5 girls. Text 419-769-5698.**

**FOR SALE: 12000 Badlands Winch with remote with universal truck mount - \$449 - New in Boxes 419-258-0127**

**TIMBER WANTED:** Specializing in walnut trees, white oak trees and hardwood trees. Buyer of standing timber. Call Gary Keegan 517-296-4601

2-31p

**FORT DEFiance Antiques: 402 Clinton St. Downtown Defiance, OH. Hours M-Sat 10-5. 419-782-6003**

**MOWER LIFT FOR SALE: Huskee HZR350 Lift for riding or zero turn lawn mower. \$65obo. Call 419-258-0127**

**PRICE LOWERED** to \$1129 – **GRAPPLE FOR SALE:** Titan Attachments Grapple for tractor or skid steer. Hydraulic cylinder, 48". 419-258-0127

**DESIGN - PRINT - ADVERTISE:** Books, Calendars, Cards – West Bend Printing can get you what you need FAST! 419-258-2000.

**RAIN TECH SEAMLESS GUTTERS, 419-258-1818**

2-4

**DEADLINE FOR CLASSIFIEDS IN WEST BEND NEWS IS FRIDAYS AT 12NOON!**

tal—no reported injuries at the time of this release.

First-arriving crews reported the residence was fully involved in fire, and they immediately began a transitional fire attack at 04:19:11. Fire crews attempted a transition to an offensive attack but were unable to move interior due to the extent of the fire. The roof had collapsed, making an interior fire attack more difficult. Fire crews took defensive measures at 04:28:50. One occupant was alerted to the fire concern and exited the structure before the fire division's arrival. Two other occupants, both reported to be adults, were unaccounted for and believed to be in an upstairs bedroom. The fire was brought under control at 06:41. Extensive damage to the home occurred. No firefighter injuries are being reported at the time of this release.

The State of Ohio Fire Marshals' Office was also requested to the scene by Defiance Fire and Rescue to assist with the investigation. The cause is under investigation at the time of this release. The origin appears to be in a room on the front side of the structure, according to the SFM investigator, but the cause remains under investigation. Two adult occupants, deceased, were removed from the structure this morning. Those individuals were reported to be located in the upstairs bedroom on the back side of the structure. These two individuals are under the care of the Defiance County Coroner's office and will be transported to Lucas County for autopsies.

Our community endured the loss of two individuals this morning. We would ask for your support for the family involved, the firefighters who worked to extinguish the fire and support rescue efforts, the Defiance Police Department, and our aiding agencies from Noble Township, South Richland, and Highland Township.

The Defiance Fire and Rescue Division would like to express our thanks to the community who have already

Language program, and Candace K. Galla, associate professor of Indigenous language and literacy at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, helped PFW last summer become just the 29th institution in the United States to be awarded a UNESCO Chair. There are more than 1,000 UNESCO Chairs worldwide. Purdue Fort Wayne's is the first and only in Indiana.

Purdue University has chosen to recognize and reward Dr. Shannon Bischoff as a named professor for his continued impact on Indigenous and non-dominant populations," said Connie Kracher, associate vice chancellor for research. "On behalf of Purdue Fort Wayne, we congratulate Shannon and his colleagues for their outstanding research contributions to this field. It is an honor for PFW to be awarded the first UNESCO Chair in Purdue's history."

Bischoff is also the director of the Three Rivers Language Center in the School of Education, one of PFW's 15 Centers of Excellence. Click here to learn more about the TRLC.

### ODNR DIVISION OF WILDLIFE CHIEF APPOINTED CHAIR OF AFWA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Kendra Wecker, chief of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife, was recently appointed as the Chair of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Executive Committee. Chief Wecker was appointed for a one-year term as Chair of the Executive Committee.

AFWA represents North America's fish and wildlife agencies to advance sound, science-based management and conservation of fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest. The AFWA Executive Committee is charged with employing an executive director and additional employees for the organization, as well as approving a budget.

Kendra Wecker was appointed as the Chair of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) Executive Committee.

"Kendra Wecker will be a great asset to AFWA as Chair of the Executive Committee, bringing a great wealth of

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# KYZER REALTY OPENS NEW LOCATION IN PAULDING!



L-R: Alyssa Thome, Rita Bowling, Tori Young all of Kyzer Realty, and Jill Strahley, of the Paulding Area Chamber of Commerce

Kyzer Realty celebrated the opening of its new Paulding office with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Thursday, January 15, at its new location on Courthouse Square. The office is located at 103.5 E. Perry St., on the southwest corner of the square in downtown Paulding.

The expansion marks Kyzer Realty's move into Paulding County as the company continues to grow beyond its roots in Defiance, Ohio. Company representatives said the new location will allow them to better

serve clients in Paulding and surrounding communities while maintaining their established presence in Defiance.

The downtown location places Kyzer Realty in the heart of Paulding's business district, offering convenient access for buyers, sellers, and property owners seeking real estate services.

Bowling, a longtime resident and real estate agent of the Defiance, OH area. With the work of our hometown agents, our goal is to provide our customers with the best home buying and selling services in Northwest Ohio."

Kyzer Realty provides residential, commercial, and land real estate services across northwest Ohio and would love to serve you! Call 419-786-0009 for more information or go to the website to learn more about the company and its services can be found at [kyzerrealty.com](http://kyzerrealty.com).

## VILLAGE OF PAYNE INVITES BUSINESS OWNERS TO DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION GRANT MEETING

The Village of Payne invites local business owners to attend an open meeting

on January 26 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss a potential Downtown Revitalization Grant and future improvements to the village's downtown area.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear directly from business owners about their interest in making improvements to their buildings, including exterior enhancements, facade upgrades, accessibility improvements, or other qualifying projects.

Feedback from the business community will help determine whether the Village should proceed with a grant

The Downtown Revitalization Grant program is intended to encourage reinvestment in downtown areas, support local businesses, and enhance the overall appearance and economic vitality of the Village of Payne.

The meeting will be held at 119 N. Main Street, Payne, Ohio 45880. All downtown business owners are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and share ideas. Attendance does not obligate participation in any future project.

Additional information about the Downtown Revitalization Grant program is available at: <https://www.mypo.org/downtown-revitalization>

For questions, please contact Lora Lyons at [mayor@villageofpayne.com](mailto:mayor@villageofpayne.com)

## DEFIANCE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM HOSTS 'TEEN WINTER CRAZE' READING CHALLENGE

Defiance County students in grades 6-12 can win prizes for reading and writing book reviews during Defiance Public Library System's (DPLS) 2026 'Teen Winter Craze' reading challenge, taking place online Feb. 1-28.

Participants can log the time they read and write a book review on Beanstack ([defiancepubliclibrary.beanstack.org](http://defiancepubliclibrary.beanstack.org)) to be entered into weekly prize drawings. Readers can also use the Beanstack Tracker app, available as a free download in the Apple and Google Play stores, for easy, on-the-go logging.

More reading and writing

## ANTWERP AMERICAN LEGION POST #253 MAKE DONATION TO THE PAULDING VETERANS MEMORIAL



Pictured (l-r) are Greg Geyer of Antwerp American Post #253, and John Daeger of Paulding VFW Post #587.

Antwerp American Post #253 recently made a \$2,000 donation to the Paulding Veterans Memorial. Their donation will go towards the purchase of granite monuments for the memorial.

The American Legion is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of America's veterans, their families, and communities. Through a focus on mutual support and service, the organization strives to provide meaningful assistance and create a positive impact for those who have served in the military and their loved ones.

The Paulding Veterans Memorial project is focused on building a memorial park to honor the service and sacrifice of those brave men and women from our community who served in the armed forces of the United States of America.

For more information about supporting the Paulding Veterans Memorial project, please contact Lisa McClure at the Paulding County Area Foundation, John Daeger at the Paulding VFW Post or Mike Kauser at Kauser Trucking.

For additional information, visit [defiancepubliclibrary.org/craze](http://defiancepubliclibrary.org/craze), or contact the library at 419-782-1456. The Teen Winter Craze is sponsored by the Friends of Defiance Public Library.



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