

# The WEST BEND NEWS

www.westbendnews.net

VOLUME 22 – ISSUE 4

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

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026

## ANDERSON HITS 1,000-POINT MILESTONE AS WOODLAN SLIPS PAST BISHOP LUERS, 55-54



The first thirteen points for the Warriors belonged to senior Alyssa Anderson as she reached her 1000 points! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)

In a thrilling back-and-forth contest Tuesday night, the Woodlan Warriors edged Bishop Luers Knights 55-54, sealing the win in the closing minutes of a tightly contested matchup on January 20.

Woodlan jumped out early, taking an 18-13 lead after the first quarter and extending the advantage to 36-21 at halftime. Bishop Luers responded with a strong third quarter, outscoring the Warriors 17-12 to pull back within striking distance, and continued the pressure down the stretch. The Knights outscored Woodlan 16-7 in the final period, but Woodlan did just enough to hold on for the one-point victory.

The night belonged to senior Alyssa Anderson, who poured in a game-high 36 points and reached a major career milestone in the process,

scoring her 1,000th career point. Anderson's performance anchored the Warriors offensively and proved to be the difference in a game decided by the slimmest of margins.

Savannah Scheumann added nine points for Woodlan, while Lexie Peoples chipped in four. Layla Hodson, Scarlett Gillingham, and Kaitlyn Sterling each contributed to the scoring effort as the Warriors balanced timely baskets with late-game composure.

Bishop Luers was led by a balanced attack, with Glenn scoring 18 points and Green adding 15. Brown finished with 11 points, while Warner added seven and Gray chipped in three as the Knights mounted their late comeback attempt.

## MONROEVILLE'S RAIL HISTORY UNFOLDS

Area rail enthusiast and historian Walt Mattes, will be the guest speaker at the February monthly meeting of Four Presidents Corners Historical Society. Mattes will talk about the establishment of the town, along with the first railroad with the Pittsburgh station and siding in Monroeville. Mattes' talk will include a Powerpoint with special interest in the gate towers, double tracks, sidings, crossing and routes.

The meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 4, at Monroeville branch library. All are welcome to attend. Refreshments will be served.

## CHOCOLATE EXTRAVAGANZA RETURNS TO OAKWOOD MARCH 10 & 12

Time is nearing for the 18th annual Chocolate Extravaganza in Oakwood, a much-anticipated community tradition that brings friends together for an evening of fun, fellowship, and an abundance of chocolate, while also supporting the library. First held in 2006, the Chocolate Extravaganza began as a fundraiser for what is now the Cooper Community Library. Over the years, the event has grown steadily in popularity and has become a favorite annual night out for many attendees.

Guests at this year's Extravaganza will enjoy up to 30 delicacies, thoughtfully prepared and beautifully displayed in a festively decorated setting. Those who reserve a full table of eight will receive a discount, making it an ideal opportunity for groups of friends to attend together.

In honor of America's upcoming 250th birthday, the Event Planners have selected "All-American Chocolate Party" as the theme for this year's celebration. While there is no formal dress code, many guests enjoy adding to the fun by wearing attire that reflects the theme so a sea of red, white, and blue is anticipated.

In addition to an impressive chocolate selection, the night includes drinks, party favors, and opportunities to win several door prizes. The Extravaganza promises a lively atmosphere filled with sweet treats, laughter, and community spirit. Attendees are encouraged to bring "To Go" containers.

The Chocolate Extravaganza will be held at 7 PM on Tuesday, March 10, and Thursday, March 12, in the community room adjoining the Cooper Community Library. Attendance is limited to 88 per night, and is expected to fill quickly. Text or call 419-438-1159.

## PERI DIST 2 CHAPTER 10 MEETING DATE SET

NOTICE: PERI District 2 Chapter 10 Paulding County will hold their meeting Wednesday, February 4, 2026 at 10:00 am in the Community Room of Paulding Co. Library. Speaker will be Barb Grant, PCH Auxiliary. All are welcome.

## FORMER CMH PROPERTY SELLS FOR \$1.8 MILLION IN ONLINE AUCTION



HICKSVILLE — The former Community Memorial Hospital (CMH) property in Hicksville was sold this week following a 48-hour online auction that ended with a last-minute surge in bidding, resulting in a final sale price of \$1.8 million. The identity of the winning bidder has not yet been released.

The auction, conducted by Crexi (CXTTechnology LLC), drew little activity for much of its duration before escalating

rapidly in the final two minutes. Hicksville Village had entered a reserve bid of \$399,000, which remained the only bid for several hours before a late bidding war pushed the price up by approximately \$1.4 million.

"We thought we had it until those last two minutes," Hicksville Village Administrator Cory Wann said following the close of the auction.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## ANTWERP NAMED ONE OF THE EDUCATION MAGAZINE'S "10 MOST ADMIRED SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR 2026"

# THE EDUCATION MAGAZINE

Enlightening The Educational Landscape

Antwerp Local Schools has been recognized as one of The Education Magazine's "10 Most Admired School Districts for 2026," a prestigious honor that highlights the district's long-standing commitment to preparing students for a changing world through innovation, academic excellence, and inclusive community engagement. This national accolade places Antwerp among a select group

of districts across the United States celebrated for their leadership in education.

The Education Magazine feature, titled "The 10 Most Admired School Districts," showcases districts that exemplify outstanding practices in serving their communities, fostering student success, and adapting to modern educational needs. Antwerp Local

*(Continued on Page 2)*

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Engravings can be dedicated to current military members or those who have honorably completed their service.

The order form to have a veteran's name engraved on a granite panel may be picked up at the Paulding VFW Post, Paulding ACE Hardware, Paulding Veterans Services, Paulding County Area Foundation or Kauser Trucking.

The order form may also be obtained by scanning the QR to the right or by calling John Daeger at 419-989-0548.

## Local Advertisers appreciating local news

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| United Edge Toy Auction     | 12 |
| WT Raider Spotlight         | 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 26**

• Cookbook Club (Adult, 5:30p & Teen, 4p) @ Paulding Library

**January 27**

• NA Meeting @ Paulding Recovery Clubhouse, 6p

**January 28**

• Book Club @ GH Library, 4p

**January 29**

• Microsoft 365 Excel Training @ NSCC, Van Wert, 8a-4p

• S.M.A.R.T. Recovery Meeting @ Paulding Recovery Clubhouse 6p

**January 30**

• Leadership Training Workshop @ Bryan Chamber office, 8a-5p  
• Registration PHS Community Clean Up Day Deadline, Contact Paulding Chamber

**January 31**

• Snowman Measuring Sticks craft @ Sherwood Library, 10a-12p, registration required

**February 3**

• Kinship Caregivers Support Group @ Recovery Clubhouse, Paulding 6-7p  
• Microsoft 365 Excel Training @ NSCC, Archbold, 8a-4p

**February 4**

• Senior Citizens Dinner @ Antwerp VFW @ noon  
• Monroeville Rail History

**February 5**

• Microsoft 365 Excel Training



Add your event to the calendar [info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net)

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**UNITED WAY OF DEFIANCE COUNTY RECEIVES \$5,000 GRANT FOR DEFIANCE RIDES PROGRAM**



Pictured with the grant are (L to R) Aaron Keller - K&P Member/Owner, Angie Franklin - Executive Director of NOCAC, Abby Wolfrum - Executive Director of United Way of Defiance County and Laurie McCann - DAF Board of Trustees Member.

United Way of Defiance County has received a \$5,000 grant through the Defiance Area Foundation's fall 2025 grant cycle. The funding was awarded from the DAF Community Fund and will support the new Defiance Rides initiative.

Defiance Rides is designed to provide transportation for Defiance County residents who lack access to reliable transportation, including rides to medical and legal appointments as well as transportation to and from employment.

Maumee Valley Planning Organization (MVPO) is coordinating the regional grant request on behalf of Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Paulding, Putnam, and Williams counties. The joint application was submitted to the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) ahead of the January 16 deadline, with the goal of securing funding that would then be distributed to all participating counties through MVPO.

The conversation then shifted to open and ongoing WHO-funded projects already taking place within Paulding County. In 2025, the county was awarded \$300,000 to complete ten residential rehabilitation projects before a June 2027 deadline. Three projects are currently active. Work at 714 N. Main Street in Paulding is nearing completion and will be the first of the ten required county projects finished. Additional rehabilitation efforts are underway at 108 S. Main Street in Cecil and 621 Sugar Street in Paulding. More projects are expected to begin as current projects complete.

Environmental consultant Matt Wagner of Tetra Tech reported that all remediation work is complete at the former JJ Ross Gas Station site in Grover Hill. The final step prior to sale is the issuance and receipt of a No Further Action letter from the Ohio EPA.

Wagner also confirmed that the Land Bank will submit new brownfield applications for the 2026 funding cycle. Proposed projects include environmental reviews at 126 S. Main Street in Payne, 501 North Avenue in Oakwood, and 495 E. Perry Street in Paulding. Additional site funding may also be applied for at the former Spartech Plastics facility, pending review of recent environmental data and coordination between the current property owner and the Land Bank.

MVPO's Abby White then provided updates on the county's 2025 Commercial and Blight Removal Program. Only a few properties remain in the open pipeline, and the program's funds are expected to be fully utilized as those projects conclude. The committee then began reviewing the remaining 2025 projects that were not allocated funding and added newly submitted 2026 proposals. A finalized list will be submitted soon for the county's \$250,000 2026 allocation.

Additional committee business included:

- Reported a current account balance of \$157,631.21
- Work updates on open brownfield projects at the Grizzley and Stokely sites in Paulding
- Establishing property maintenance plans for Land Bank-owned property ahead of spring
- Approving a meeting date change to February 4 due to member scheduling conflicts

**PAULDING COUNTY SENIOR CENTER FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES CALENDAR**

- 2/2 - 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 10:30 a.m. Cornhole; 12:30 p.m. Bridge Club
- 2/3 - 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 12:00 p.m. Bingo w/Country Inn
- 2/4 - 9:00 a.m. Rummy; 11:30 a.m. Birthday & Anniversary Celebration w/Ron

- 1:00 p.m. Grocery Shopping
- 2/5 - Closed for Staff In-Service
- 2/6 - 10:00 a.m. Bible Study
- 2/9 - 9:00 a.m. Coffee, Donuts & Trivia w/Kari; 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 10:30 a.m. Cornhole; 12:30 p.m. Bridge Club
- 2/10 - 8:15 a.m. Leave for Vantage Spa Day; 9:45 a.m. Euchre
- 2/11 - 9:00 a.m. Rummy; 10:30 a.m. Bingo sponsored by Vancrest of Payne; 12:00 p.m. Diamond Art w/Mike & Barbara; 1:00 p.m. Grocery Shopping
- 2/12 - Toenail Clinic; 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 12:00 p.m. Bingo w/Kingsbury Place
- 2/13 - 10:00 a.m. Bible Study; 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Commodity Distribution; 10:00 a.m. Button Flower Vases; 11:30 a.m. Valentine's Day Luncheon; 12:00 p.m. Valentine's S'mores and Trivia
- 2/16 - Happy President's Day
- 2/17 - 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 10:00 a.m. Caregiver Support Group w/Susan Paulus; 12:00-2:00 p.m. Food Distribution @ Fairgrounds
- 2/18 - 9:00 a.m. Rummy; 10:00 a.m. Bingo w/Gardens of Paulding; 12:00 p.m. Diamond Art w/Mike & Barbara; 1:00 p.m. Grocery Shopping
- 2/19 - Digital Navigation; 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 12:00 p.m. Intro to Digital Couponing w/Joe Burgei; 5:00 p.m. Evening Meal w/Fedora & Fretz
- 2/20 - 10:00 a.m. Bible Study; 12:00 p.m. Family Feud
- 2/23 - 9:00 a.m. Coffee, Donuts & Trivia w/Antwerp Manor; 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 10:30 a.m. Cornhole; 12:00 p.m. Steering Committee Meeting; 12:30 p.m. Bridge Club
- 2/24 - 9:00-10:30 a.m. Alzheimer's Consultations & Dementia Drop w/Marybeth; 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 12:15 p.m. - Penny Pitch w/Meadows of Kalida
- 2/25 - 9:00 a.m. Rummy; 12:00 p.m. Blood Pressures & Weight w/CHP; 12:00 p.m. Bingo w/Buckeye Hearing; 12:00 p.m. Diamond Art w/Mike & Barbara; 1:00 p.m. Grocery Shopping
- 2/26 - 9:45 a.m. Euchre; 10:00 a.m. Exercise; 12:30 p.m. Leave for Byler Lane Winery
- 2/27 - 10:00 a.m. Bible Study; 12:00 p.m. Cookies, Cocoa Bar & Scattergories

**PAULDING COUNTY SENIOR CENTER FEBRUARY DINING MENU**

- 2/2 - Beef stroganoff, Key West blend veggies, Warm apple sauce, Cole slaw, Dinner roll
- 2/3 - Oven fried chicken, Red potatoes, Scandinavian veggies, Grape juice, Cookie, Fruit
- 2/4 - Mushroom steak, Mashed potatoes, Succotash, Tropical fruit, Dinner roll, Birthday cake
- 2/5 - No meal; Staff In-service Day
- 2/6 - BBQ pork sandwich, Warm spiced peaches, Broccoli, Carrot raisin salad, Goldfish crackers, Orange juice
- 2/9 - Cabbage roll casserole over white rice, Blushing pineapple, Dinner roll, Cherry fruit crisp
- 2/10 - Country fried chicken, Mashed potatoes & gravy, Dinner roll, Glazed carrots, Pink blushing pears

(Continued on Page 8)

**Scripture of the Week**

"As for God, his way is perfect: The Lord's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him."

— Psalm 18:30

**UNIMAGINABLE BLESSINGS**

1 Corinthians 2:9 states, "But, as it is written, 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.'" This verse emphasizes the profound nature of God's promises and the blessings that await believers.

The imagery of what is unseen, unheard, and beyond human imagination speaks to the vastness and richness of God's gifts. It suggests that the experiences and rewards in the next life will far surpass anything we can comprehend in the earthly realm. The passage also encourages believers to understand that their love for God opens the door to these incredible blessings, which are not fully revealed in our current experience.

In a broader context, this verse is part of a discussion about wisdom and revelation. Paul emphasizes that the wisdom of God is often hidden from the wise of this world. It's



a reminder that those who may seem wise or knowledgeable in worldly terms might miss the greater truths found in faith and divine revelation.

Ultimately, this scripture invites us to trust in God's promises and to hold on to our faith, knowing that what lies ahead is unimaginable in its goodness and glory. Try to imagine the unimaginable; it will keep you in awesome wonder. Smile, Jesus loves you, and so do I.

Peace and Love  
Pastor Dwayne

**LENTEN LUNCHESES IN PAULDING**

\*Lenten Lunches begin on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2026 and are held each of the six Wednesdays in Lent.

\*All of the meals are held in the First Presbyterian Church's Fellowship Hall at the corner of Caroline and N Cherry Streets.

\*All meals begin at noon and conclude by 1:00 so that they can fit into people's lunch hours.

\*Each event includes a meal and a brief devotional.

\*Meals are free; a freewill donation basket supports the work of the Ministerial Association. Also, food donations are collected that are given to the Caring and Sharing Food Pantry, Paulding.

\*While all the meals are held at the Presbyterian Church, a different church provides the food and the devotional each of the six weeks. The schedule of hosting churches for 2026 is:

- Wed., 2/18 First Presbyterian
- Wed., 2/25 First Christian (Disciples of Christ)
- Wed., 3/4 Divine Mercy Catholic Parish
- Wed. 3/11 St. Paul Lutheran
- Wed., 3/18 Church of the Nazarene
- Wed. 3/25 United Methodist

**WHO GRANT, BROWNFIELD AND RESIDENTIAL BLIGHT PROJECTS HIGHLIGHT NEW YEAR IN PAULDING COUNTY**

The Paulding County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) opened its first meeting of 2026 with updates on several major housing, brownfield, and blight-removal initiatives underway around the county.

The meeting began with a discussion involving a collaborative six-county Welcome Home Ohio (WHO) grant application. Estee Blair of the

(Antwerp Admired Continued from Page 1)

Schools is spotlighted under the segment "Educating Students for a Changing World," which traces the district's evolution from its roots in north-west Ohio to its current role as an innovative learner-centered institution.

According to the magazine, selections for this recognition reflect more than just academic performance; they also honor districts that embody leadership, community involvement, forward-looking educational programs, and the ability to prepare students for life beyond the classroom. Antwerp's inclusion underscores the district's success in blending tradition with progress, ensuring that students benefit from a safe and supportive learning environment while gaining skills relevant to a dynamic global landscape.

District administrators and staff have emphasized that this recognition is a testament to

the collective efforts of educators, families, and community partners who work every day to enrich student experiences. The honor also raises Antwerp's profile among its peers nationwide, highlighting the district as an example of what rural public education can achieve when driven by strong community values and educational excellence. As Antwerp Local Schools celebrates this distinguished recognition, students, parents, and educators alike can take pride in the district's achievements and continued dedication to quality education for all.

The full story can be read at Education Magazine's website by following this link:

<https://www.theeducation-magazine.com/antwerp-local-schools/>



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**RIDDLE ME THIS**

**Penny For Your Thoughts**

**By: Nancy Whitaker**

The only riddle I have ever been able to solve is, What is black and white and read all over? I do like to read good riddles because it gets me thinking of what the answer could be. I wonder how many of these riddles that I have listed that you can answer.

I bet you a Penny that someone will get them all right.

**What is seen in the middle of March and April that can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month?** (Don't think of the weather)

Answer: The letter R

**What English word has three consecutive double letters?** This one seems pretty impossible, but use the facts you know about English to get the answer, then think of words with double vowels. Do you know the answer?

Answer: Bookkeeper.

**A woman shoots her husband, then holds him underwater for five minutes. Next, she hangs him. Right after, they enjoy a lovely dinner. Explain this scene if you can.....**This puzzle aims to throw you off balance with shock. But pay attention to the first verb, "shoots." What else can you shoot with besides a gun? There lies the key to the whole thing.

Answer: She took a picture of him and developed it in her darkroom..

**I come from a mine and get surrounded by wood always. Everyone uses me. What am I?**

The idea of a mine might lead you to coal or a diamond. The wood detail is your best hint. This short riddle is truly a toughie, but the wood part might lead you to figure it out.

Answer: Pencil lead

**A girl has as many brothers as sisters, but each brother has only half as many brothers as sisters. How many brothers and sisters are there in the family?** This riddle sounds like a tongue twister and gives you a bunch of ways to get totally confused when you try to figure out the answer. The key is to keep it simple. Be sure to count the sisters and brothers in total and in terms of their own

number of siblings. Then the answer gets a little easier.

Answer: Four sisters and three brothers

**I have keys, but no locks and space, and no rooms. You can enter, but you can't go outside. What am I?** This hard riddle tricks you by having you think about space that can be entered. Then it gets you to merge that with a space without rooms where you can't leave. You might even be hung up on those keys. That's where you should linger. Think about that word. What are some other meanings of keys—especially those that don't require locks?



Answer: A keyboard.

**How many letters are in the alphabet?** Some hard riddles are confusing because they send you to the easiest answer first. You got this one easily, right? Twenty-six—if you're talking about the English alphabet. Not so fast. Take another look from a different perspective.

Answer: There are 11 letters in "the alphabet"

**A is the brother of B. B is the brother of C. C is the father of D. So how is D related to A?**

Hard riddles try to derail your train of thought, sending it into multiple directions. For this one, the key is to think of relatives.

Answer: A is D's uncle.

**This belongs to you, but everyone else uses it.** The key to this hard riddle is to think of anything else but an actual object. Use your critical-thinking skills to get conceptual on this one.

Answer: Your name.

**What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?**

Again, riddles like this often have you crunching the numbers and stretching your brain cells thinking about time and the way it works. By now, you might have figured out that number riddles rarely involve math.

Answer: The letter M.

**Which word in the dictionary is always spelled incorrectly?** This is such an easy answer that it messes with your

**HARTING SPEAKS TO KIWANIS**



**Heather Hunt, Kiwanis member & Halie Harting, Shop Owner**

This week, the Kiwanis Club of Paulding was delighted to host Halie Harting, founder of Harting Homesteaders, as the guest speaker. Halie, along with her family, has embraced a back-to-basics lifestyle, focusing on providing natural, sustainable products for everyday living.

Harting Homesteaders, located in a classic, antique storefront in Convoy, Ohio, offers a wide variety of organic products, including hand sanitizer, laundry soap, sore muscle relief, and so much more. Each product is crafted with a

commitment to quality and sustainability, making it easier for consumers to make eco-conscious choices without sacrificing effectiveness.

Halie shared with the Kiwanis members the story behind her family's decision to go back to basics and how their passion for natural living turned into a thriving business. The community as well as surrounding communities have responded enthusiastically, supporting the shop as a local source for environmentally friendly alternatives to everyday products.

(CMH Continued from Page 1)

As of Friday morning, Crexi had not disclosed the name of the successful bidder. Wann said village officials hope the new owner will have an interest in returning some form of healthcare services to the community, noting the hospital's long history serving Hicksville and surrounding areas, including many residents from neighboring Paulding County who relied on CMH for care.

Even as recently as Tuesday, Hicksville Village Council heard a presentation from Chris Fisher of Fisher Health System outlining possible options if the building were leased for healthcare-related use. That presentation led council into executive session to discuss whether the village should place a bid in the auction.

When council returned to open session, members Toni Egly, Eric Bassett and Kent Miller voted against submitting a bid, while Bo Gonwick, Mike Villena and Brian Zeedyk voted in favor. Mayor Mike Barth cast the tie-breaking vote in support of the village bid.

The auction ran from noon Tuesday through noon Thursday and included the 99,912-square-foot hospital building located at 108 Columbus Ave., along with 20.56 acres of land zoned for public use. The potential

closing date is on or before Feb. 24.

The auction followed the termination of a previously proposed village purchase agreement for \$2.35 million on Nov. 7, after a deal with a prospective healthcare end user fell through. Wann described the village's involvement as an effort to act as a "gatekeeper" for the property, with the goal of finding an owner committed to bringing healthcare services back to the community.

Community Memorial Hospital suspended operations in May 2024 due to financial difficulties. In August 2024, the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) filed a civil case in common pleas court against the Mark, Milford, Hicksville Joint Township Hospital District seeking to recover approximately \$3 million in unpaid retirement and health contributions, including employee withholdings dating back to 2022.

Citing the hospital's financial condition, the court appointed Gibbons Advisors (Ohio), LLC as receiver on Aug. 23, 2024. It was at that time acting through co-founder and managing director Winters Gibbons who then authorized the permanent shutdown a little over a week later.

head by getting you to think in a complex way.

Answer: Incorrectly.

**What is able to go up a chimney when down but unable to go down a chimney when up?** Try to think out of the box for this one. It may not be something you would normally find in your chimney.

Answer: An umbrella.

I usually ruin people's riddles by just plain not knowing the answer. I bet everyone got the correct answers to these riddles, and if you do, I will give you a Penny For Your Thoughts

**MILITARY HISTORY IN PAULDING COUNTY**

**By: Mark Holtsberry**

Raymond Henry Stults was born in January 1892 in Paulding, Ohio. He was the son of George M. Stults, born February 12, 1867, in Highland County, Ohio, and Lizzie C. (Cooper) Stults, born June 8, 1867, in Ohio. The couple was married on March 17, 1889. On December 9, 1889, they welcomed a son, John Clinton Stults. In January 1892, Raymond was born.

On October 8, 1896, Lizzie

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

passed away from ulcers. She was buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery. By 1900, Raymond



and John were living with their grandmother in Paulding, where both boys attended grade school. On August 20, 1901, John passed away from typhoid fever and was buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery.

By 1905, Raymond had quit school after completing the eighth grade. By 1910, he was still living with his grandmother and working various odd jobs. That same year, George married Lula Gertrude (Howard), who was born November 13, 1880, in Ohio. On March 29, 1911, she gave birth to a son, Harry Arthur Stults, in Hudson, Michigan. On October 6, 1913, George died in Hudson, Michigan, and was buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery.

On June 5, 1917, Raymond registered for the World War I draft at the Paulding precinct. He was listed as 5 feet 7 inches tall, of medium build, with blue eyes and dark brown hair. He was single and self-employed as a farmer. On March 29, 1918, Raymond joined the National Army out of Paulding and served with Headquarters Troop, 83rd Division. He was promoted to Corporal on April 6, 1919, and to Sergeant on June 13, 1919. He served until July 23, 1919, and was honorably discharged on July 31, 1919.

By 1920, Raymond was again living with his grandmother on Flatrock Pike in Paulding and continued working in farming. On September 14, 1926, in Hudson, Michigan, Raymond married bookkeeper Martha W. Barnes. She was born February 22, 1905, in Paulding. They had two sons: John Clinton Stults, born in 1928, and Raymond Henry Stults, born in 1936.

By 1930, Raymond and his

family were living on River Road, where he worked as a road laborer for the state highway department while also farming. By 1940, the family had moved into Paulding, and Raymond was working as a hotel clerk for Ray Schall. In 1942, Raymond registered for the World War II draft.

On February 2, 1948, Raymond passed away and was buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery, Lot 118, Grave 1. His wife, Martha, passed away on March 3, 2000, and was buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery. Son John Clinton Stults passed away on February 17, 1999 and served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. Raymond Henry Stults passed away on October 21, 2013. Both sons were buried in Cooper-Haines Cemetery.

UNTIL NEXT TIME

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**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 COUNTY WMEA RECYCLING**

**New Schedule For Large Villages**

- 1st Weekend- Paulding , Fair Grounds
- 2nd Weekend- Grover Hill , VFW
- 3rd Weekend- Payne , (Paved lot east of Homier's)
- 4th Weekend- Antwerp , (13744 CR 43, sewer treatment plant)

**New Schedule For Smaller Villages**

- 3rd Wednesday of each month
- Cecil 11:30-12:00 (Fire Station)
- Junction 12:30-1:00 (Catholic Church)
- Haviland/Scott 1:30-2:00 (SR 114 at Haviland Park)
- Latty/Briceton 2:30-3:00 (Latty Park)

**For Questions Call : 419-399-3630 or Visit : www.pauldingcountywmea.com**

# PAULDING FFA RECEIVES MISSION FUND GRANT FROM AGCREDIT



Pictured here from left to right is Paulding FFA Officer team and Ag Credit Members. FFA Officers: Jacob Harris, Ava Leatherman, Delaney Johanns, Vivienne Myers, FFA Advisor Ms. Baylee March, Matt Adams and Katie Miller representing Ag Credit, FFA Advisor Mrs. Staci Miller, officers Mariah Klopfenstein, Darcy Taylor, Myrriah Manz, Addy Hunt and Tori Schlatter.

AgCredit, one of northern Ohio's largest lenders for farmers, rural homeowners and agribusiness, recently announced that it is awarding \$135,900 in Mission Fund grants to 14 community organizations in support of their efforts to improve the quality of life in communities primarily within the cooperative's 18-county service territory.

Paulding FFA is one of this year's recipients of the grant, receiving \$12,600.00. These funds will be used to make repairs to the FFA's commercial-grade greenhouse. The greenhouse was constructed in 2007 and is operated and maintained by Paulding Exempted Village Schools and the Ag Education students. It offers students valuable, hands-on experience in managing and

operating a commercial greenhouse.

"We're proud to be able to invest in the local community for projects like this, where students are learning and understanding the positive impact of agriculture in their communities", said Matt Adams, AgCredit Lending Manager.

Now in its eighth year, the Mission Fund supports AgCredit's commitment to investing in the future of agriculture and positively impacting the quality of life in rural Ohio. Recipients were selected based on their proposals to meet criteria in one or more of four key areas: Education, environment, technology and quality of rural life.

Following are all of Ag-

Credit's 2025 Mission Fund grant recipients:

- Bellevue Fire Department, Huron County, \$10,000
- Central Lorain County Joint Ambulance District, Lorain County, \$10,000
- Fort Jennings Volunteer Fire Department, Putnam County, \$8,000
- Lucas County Ag Society, Lucas County, \$15,000
- Ottawa Volunteer Fire Department, Putnam County, \$2,026.76
- Paulding FFA, Paulding County, \$12,600
- Payne Fire Association, Paulding County, \$7,500
- Pemberville Freedom Fire Department, Wood County, \$5,000
- Portage Fire District Firefighters Association, Ottawa County, \$6,000

- Putnam County Rabbit Poultry Committee, Putnam County, \$14,850
- Van Wert County Ag Society, Van Wert County, \$15,000
- Vermillion FFA, Erie County, \$7,500
- Western Reserve Ag Ed Department, Huron County, \$7,500
- Wyandot County Ag Society, Wyandot County, \$15,000

Organizations may apply for Mission Fund grants of up to \$15,000 per year. The 2026 application process will begin in March, and funds will be distributed by Dec. 31. For more information about the lending cooperative or the Mission Fund, visit AgCredit.net.



## STEEL MAGNOLIAS AT THE HUBER OPERA HOUSE ON FEBRUARY 13, 14 & 15

Set in small-town Chinquapin, Louisiana, the play centers around the lives of six women who regularly gather at Truvy's beauty salon, a social hub where they share laughter, joys, and sorrows from their everyday lives.

At the beginning, Truvy (played by Lindsay Clem), the outspoken and kind-hearted owner of the salon, has just hired a shy newcomer named Annelle (Elizabeth Vance), who is trying to find her place in the world. They are doing the hair of soon-to-be-bride Shelby (Taylor Sidle) and her mother, M'Lynn (Stephanie Longbrake). She expresses her concern about Shelby, who has type 1 diabetes and wants to have children despite the health risks. Soon, Clairee (Jami Sons-Beard), the witty

and wealthy widow of the former mayor, and Ouiser (Jennifer Thomas), the local eccentric and grouch, join them.

As the seasons change, so do the lives of the women. Around Christmastime, as they chat and catch up, Shelby casually reveals that she is pregnant. The announcement takes the group by surprise—especially M'Lynn, who is visibly upset and concerned. Later, Shelby's baby is born healthy, but complications arise. As the women face additional challenges and choices, they rely deeply on their friendship and humor to cope.

The title symbolizes the characters: delicate like magnolias yet tough as steel. This play is a heartfelt celebration of the bonds between women, reminding audiences of the power of community and emotional support.

Visit [huberoperahouse.org](http://huberoperahouse.org) or call 419-542-9553.

## INTO THE WOODS COMES TO LIFE AT THE NISWONGER PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



A magical fairytale mash-up is headed to the stage as Into the Woods, sponsored by First Federal Bank of Van Wert and Laurie's Naturescapes, is presented by the Van Wert Civic Theatre Youth Theatre. This enchanting musical weaves beloved storybook characters into one humorous and heartfelt journey, exploring what happens after "happily ever after."

Audiences will recognize familiar characters such as Cinderella, Jack (of beanstalk fame), Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel, and more as their paths hilariously—and sometimes unexpectedly—collide in the woods. At the center of the story is a Baker and his Wife, whose quest to lift a curse sets off a chain of wishes, consequences, and lessons that remind us life is rarely as simple as a fairytale ending.

The production features a large and talented cast led by Dante Lippi as the Narrator. Faith Stoller stars as Cinderella alongside Adrian Walker as Cinderella's Prince. Caleb Thomas appears as the Baker with Ella Lamb as the Baker's Wife. Other featured roles include Grayson Baker as Jack, Xadi Groves as Milky White, Grace Spieles as Little Red Riding Hood, Meah

Johnson as the Witch, Evvy Lamb as Rapunzel, Wyatt Walker as Rapunzel's Prince, and Jettie Rammel as the Wolf.

Additional cast members include Lily Schnipke as the Stepmother; Eden Stoller and Sophia Stoller as Florinda and Lucia; Lydia Eichler as Lucinda's Mother; Nathaniel Mitchner as Cinderella's Father; Victoria Walpole as Cinderella's Mother; Elijah Foudy as the Mysterious Man; Alison Owens as Granny; and Mox Sinn as the Steward. Supporting them is a large ensemble that brings the woods to life with energy and imagination.

Performances will take place at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center on Saturday, January 24, 2026 at 7:30 PM, and Sunday, January 25, 2026 at 2:00 PM.

Information: Van Wert Live Box Office. The box office is located at 10700 Ohio 118 in Van Wert and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, or 24/7 online at [vanwertlive.com](http://vanwertlive.com) or by calling (419) 238-6722.

With its clever storytelling, memorable music, and meaningful themes, Into the Woods promises an evening of laughter, reflection, and theatrical magic for audiences of all ages.

## FREE THROW COMPETITION WINNERS GO ON TO DELPHOS



The Payne Knights of Columbus Council #3617 held their annual Free Throw competition on Wednesday, January 14th at Divine Mercy school gym. Age groups 9, 10, and 11 were represented for both Boys and Girls. There were 14 total participants. The six winners, listed below, will advance to the District Competition on Sunday, February 1st at Delphos St. John's.

Age 10 - Xander Tumblin  
Age 11 - Heath Carter  
**Girls**  
Age 9 - Anna Wagner  
Age 10 - Ariana Karhoff  
Age 11 - Landrey McCord

### WAYNE TRACE JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL 2ND 9WKS HONOR ROLL 2025/26

\*signifies 4.0  
**Academic Honor Roll (3.8-4.0)**  
12TH GRADE: Abigail Evans, Ian Jewell, \*Riley Manz,

\*Estrella Martinez Sandoval, \*Caitlyn Mead, \*Aubree Miller, \*Lexi Moore, \*Natalie Richie, Deklyn Schweinsberg, \*Torree Sinn, \*Clay Stoller, \*Emma Stouffer, Griffin Williamson

**11TH GRADE:** Anna Manz, \*Cole Manz, \*Blake Noggle, \*Noah Schlatter, \*Amber Stoller, \*Eli Treece

**10TH GRADE:** \*Jensen Beining, Elynn Clemens, \*Brinna Collins, \*Kendall Denning, \*Xylem Kashner, \*Jenna Kipfer, \*Addyson LaBounty, \*Ashlyn Manz, Kenzie Ogle, Madison Pease, Aries Ricker, \*Aukele Schmidt, \*Peyton Sennebogen, \*Lilly Shepherd, Savannah Sinn, \*Brooke Tignor

**9TH GRADE:** \*Easton Jay, \*Kendall Folsom, \*Addilynn Gerardot, Waylon McCord, Kinley Miller, Makenna Schild, Brayden Sinn, \*Brooke Stoller, \*Corbin Stoller, \*Witt Stoller, \*Jennifer Treece, \*Emma Whitman

### Honor Roll (3.0-3.79)

**12TH GRADE:** Alicia Bahena, Whitney Boroff, Kaeden Endicott, Mya Endicott, Izabella Foust, Olivia Franklin, Ryann Jay, Gauge Landwehr, Tanner Laukhuf, Hunter Lyons, Lance Maenle, Chloe McClure, Raegan McGarvey, Ryan Parker, Jack Schoenauer, Zoey Schultz, Caden Sinn, Micah Sinn, Amber Stoller, Lance Whitman, Konnor Wannemacher, Samaria Williams, Mylie Wittwer, Sierra Young

**11TH GRADE:** Katelynn Bauer, Leah Bland, Ella Crosby, Isabel Gilbert, Mckenzie Johnson, Stefany Lopez-Castillo, Maizy Ripke, Johnalynn Shellenbarger, Zachary Stoller, Arianna Viola, Campbell Volk, Monica Williams

**10TH GRADE:** Caylie Baker, Annabelle Bidlack, Cheyenne Brimmer, Connor Burriss, Jaxon Cook, Columbia Dempsey, Alivia Essex, Nicole Gerschutz, Londyn Greear, Jada Gross, Lilly Holbrook, Emma Hurd, Faith Jacobs, Teagan Kline, Brock Knowles, Isabella Lowe, Kahne Mansfield, Brenan Miller, Luke Miller, Reece Morehead, Avery Noffsinger, Cayla Noggle, Nevada Osborne, Hunter Peck, LaShan Reynolds, Braylen Ross, Braxton Schnipke, Tatum Sheets, Damara Stephey-Baldazo,

Aubrie Stoller, Alyvia Thomas, Alivia Thrasher, Karsyn Troth, Owen Welch, Nora Wenninger

**9TH GRADE:** Nathan Benschneider, Abigail Baker, Aaron Bohland, Victoria Burgei, Addilyn Davis, Evelyn Lyons, Sophia Marshall-Mencarelli, Elliot Parady, Grace Ringler, Cobain Rittenhouse, Ian Scarberry, Paige Schang, Addison Sennebogen, Layla Shellenbarger, Madison Silance, Braylin Sinn, Jonah Sinn, Olivia Stoller, Abigail Tarlton, Olivia Tarlton, Ehvajeane Trentman, Abbie Williams, Maxton Williamson, Skylar Young

### Junior High Honor Roll (3.0-4.0)

**8TH GRADE:** Mia Adkins, Brenna Beining, Hudsyn Burkley, Ross Carter, Calvin Coffman, Logan Cozart, Krandon Crites, Piper Densmore, Wyatt Head, Jordan Howell, \*Katelynn Hurd, Lauren Kipfer, Aubree Lamb, Connie Landwehr, Natalie Lord, Jocelyn Mabis, Kenzie Manz, Olivander Mccague, Miranda McCord, Ryleigh McGarvey, Griffin Miller, Madisyn Morehead, Antonia Negrete Pawoli, Scarlett Neff, Megan Parker, Audrey Reuille, Carter Ross, Calliope Stanford, Kolson Stoller, Lienna Stoller, \*Mailey Stoller, Avery Welch

**7TH GRADE:** Shawn Bradford, Londyn Dargenson, Aubrey Fairley, Gabriella Gambler, Paisley Greear, Abrie Hurd, Beckett Jay, Zoey Kraegel, Grayson LaBounty, Clare Linder, Jennifer Lopez-Castillo, Brynlee Maenle, Rilee Martin, Kaylee Miller, Adley Morehead, Samuel Schabbing, \*Sawyer Schlatter, Jaxson Shelton, Luke Shepherd, Morgan Silance, Emberlee Sinn, Aylan Stoller, Shawna Stoller, Devon Tumblin, Nuria Valdez Velazquez, Emma Wilcox

### Vantage/Wayne Trace

\*Denotes a 4.0 GPA

**AB Honor Roll**  
**12TH GRADE:** \*Tyler Blankenship, \*William Burgei, Zaden Chavez, \*Caleb Cox, Alexandria Dewaard, \*Ethan Fisher, Jordan Hale, Steven Howe, Justin Lyons, Cole Miller, Lucas Morehead, \*Tamara Negrete Pawoli, Delana Noggle, Eric Reinhart, \*Myleigh Sheets, Brayden Treece, Kaden Wilcox,

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Careen Winans, Caroline Winans  
**11TH GRADE:** Carter Baumle, Addisyn Bradtmueller, Dakota Densmore, \*Alex

Doster, \*Elizabeth Graham, Milely Jacobs, Colton Kimmel, Reece Olwin, Grayson Sutton, Corbin Varner, \*Olivia Zartman

*Editor's Note: We here at the West Bend News allow "Letters to the Editor" because we believe there is a Constitutional right to freedom of speech. Nevertheless, we do not necessarily concur with the content that has been printed. We are just the messengers. However, any letters that attack a person, or attempt to justify a physical attack that took place will not be considered. Keep your opinion to the discussion only. The name of the person who wrote the letter is placed at the end of each article along with the town of residence. To be considered for publication, you must live in our readership area. Letters must be no longer than 1000 words, and you must provide your legal name along with a phone number and address. You can submit a letter in person at our office, by email, mail or fax.*

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

email:  
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Antwerp, OH 45813

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**A METAL CROSS**

How many of you remember the first large metal cross that was located along St Rt 127 north, near Cecil? This original cross is now in the Paulding County History Museum. The story of how and why it was created is in a pamphlet. Today there is a newer one north of Antwerp on St RT49. I also recently saw one west of Van Wert along side St Rt 30.

Get Right With God. Four

words, 15 letters says so much. What do these words mean to you? Are you Right With God? Your answer will determine where you will spend eternity. When you were given life, God gave you a body, a mind and a soul. God gave you a spiritual aspect that only he can fill. Holy Spirit. Your soul will live forever some where. Heaven or Hell. When Jesus, God's son, rose alive from the tomb, God gave all of us the chance to live forever with them both in Heaven - it's real. But since Adam and Eve, we must choose between and God and Satan. Get Right With God. God loves me and he loves you. Yes, God loves us all - he created us in his image - he wants to spend eternity with us. His gift of salvation is free! It's a gift we must all accept individually. We must all look at the cross and trust, believe and obey. Four words - 15 letters - Heaven or Hell. What if everyone was Right With God

Dave Laukhuf  
Paulding, OH

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

**DON'T REMAIN QUIET**

We were blessed with two Letters To The Editor this past January 6. One was very relaxing and easy reading, the other one sounded like a mixed up anti-free America Democrat. I feel sorry for anyone like that for it is my fear they may not reach Heaven. But then, if they don't care, that's their choice.

As I said before, I started writing these letters in 2001 after reading one by a Defiance College Professor. His letter told me he shouldn't be teaching his kind of crap to our young people.

I thought my judgement of this professor was correct for when I graduated high school, I

went to Ohio University with my mind set on becoming a teacher and coach. I changed my goal before my freshman year ended, mostly because I didn't like how they taught. I change my goal and college. Upon receiving my diploma in 1958 I enjoyed my working years as an industrial engineer.

But I still had a love and desire to help kids. I then was a mentor at Fairview Elementary for five years. Life can be fun and rewarding but only if you choose to.

I've written many letters on many subjects since 2001. I received a message a few years back that I should concentrate on those that attack my God, my Christian faith or my Christian America.

Many of you could write if you just would. One of my early letters even got a doctor removed from the staff of our Hicksville hospital. Just plain truth.

I've chosen to use the term "anti-free America Democrats" because that is exactly how I see today's Democrat party. It would appear they have chosen dictatorship as their way to guide us in future years. That means no freedoms and no God.

Anyone can be a Democrat. They prefer non-Christians and lower intellectual persons. They find it easier to gain total control of you. Some of you have already fallen into their web just like the person who wrote that second letter on January 6th. There is still hope but I'm not sure how much.

Being almost 90, I feel Sandy and I grew up in America's best of times. Right now I don't see or believe we can ever match those times.

I didn't say it was impossible to return to those good times, just that don't think we can. It is very possible but it will require what I believe is an almost impossible change by a huge segment of our population.

America was born, grew and prospered as a Christian nation. When WWII ended in 1945 Democrats had already accepted the communist ACLU's humanist manifesto as their opportunity to take over and gain total control of America.

Democrats declared separation of church and state in 1947. From then on it was their hell unleashed against Christian America God. You may not accept some of the following list but if you vote for any Democrat, that says you accept them all. Pastors censored - pornography free speech - forbid God and prayers in school - abortion - gay marriage - transgenderism - condoms for teens in school - multiple sex partners - federal

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school board and more. These Democrats just plain expelled common sense.

In addition to those and more, Democrats just plain don't know that boys are male and always will be or that girls are female and always will be. They think and teach they are interchangeable but it is 100% impossible. Just ask God. I can't think of a single, really good thing coming from Democrats in my life time.

Richard Mastin  
Hicksville, OH

**LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

Shout out to Paulding County for helping Caring & Sharing Food Pantry provide needed food to your neighbors.

November and December saw an almost 35% increase in household visits to the pantry over the first part of the year, as measured by the average visits for the days the pantry is open. Nearly 2,000 people were given 3 days of food during the last two months of 2025.

Thanks to you, all of your neighbors coming to the pantry were helped. Food donations by individuals and food drives by businesses, churches, government agencies make a tremendous difference. Cash contributions allowed us to purchase needed food. Volunteers came forward to help serve the increased number visiting the pantry. In short, you stepped up and helped your neighbors.

While we are not sure what 2026 will mean for our neighbors, we know they can depend on your generosity to help them through difficult times as they deal with food insecurity.

Daniel Bulau, president  
Caring & Sharing Food Pantry  
Paulding, Ohio

**MALIA WITTWER NAMED TO PRESIDENT'S LIST AT MIAMI UNIVERSITY**

Malia Wittwer from Payne, OH was named to the Miami University fall 2025 President's list.

Miami University students ranked in the top three percent of undergraduate students within each division for the fall 2025 semester have been named to the President's list recognizing academic excellence. For more information, visit MiamiOH.edu.

**WHY SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS MORE FOR WOMEN**

When planning for retirement, Social Security isn't just another item on your financial checklist. For women especially, it's often the cornerstone of a secure retirement. The Social Security Administration reports that nearly 55% of Social Security benefit recipients are women, and for many, it's their primary source of retirement income.

Unlike investments that can lose value when the market drops, Social Security provides guaranteed income that adjusts for inflation and generally lasts as long as you live. That reliability makes it valuable for helping to address two major retirement risks: rising costs and the possibility of outliving your savings.

Life expectancy. On average, women live about five years longer than men (CDC 2023 Life Expectancy measure). That means they rely on Social Security for a longer period, making the decision of when to start benefits especially important.

Taking Social Security early reduces your monthly benefit. You can claim benefits as early as age 62, but every year you wait increases your monthly payments by two-thirds of 1%, or 8% per year, maxing out at age 70. Given women's longer life expectancy, that patience can pay off.

Building your benefit. Your Social Security benefit depends on your 35 highest-earning years. If you have years with zero or very low earnings in that calculation, it can reduce what you receive in retirement. Many women step away from work or reduce their hours to care for family members, and that trend is increasing. A 2025 University of Kansas analysis found that the share of mothers with children under age 5 leaving the workforce fell more in early 2025 than at any point in the past 40 years. The study also noted that rising return-to-office policies may continue to impact working mothers.

While staying in the work-

force builds a stronger earnings history and better benefits, that isn't realistic for everyone. Those who can't may need to plan and fund alternative sources for retirement income

Protection for married women. Marriage can provide additional Social Security options. A lower-earning spouse may receive up to 50% of their partner's full retirement-age benefit.

If your spouse dies, you can receive the higher of your own benefit or up to 100% of your deceased spouse's benefit. However, if you remarry before age 60 (age 50 for disabled widows), you lose eligibility for survivor benefits from your late spouse while the new marriage lasts.

Women divorced after at least 10 years of marriage may qualify for benefits based on an ex-spouse's record. If you remarry, you forfeit spousal benefits while the new marriage continues.

A word of wisdom: Report any name changes following marriage or divorce to the Social Security Administration to ensure your earnings and benefits are correctly credited.

Navigate carefully. Given the complexity of Social Security rules, the unique retirement challenges women face and the lasting impact of claiming decisions, working with a qualified financial advisor can be invaluable. An advisor can help you navigate questions about timing, spousal benefits and how Social Security fits into your overall retirement plan.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by our local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Edward Jones, Member SIPC



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# RAIDER SPOTLIGHT

## JANUARY 2026

### From the Superintendent's Desk ...

We are definitely into the winter season. As of this writing, we have missed 4 days of school this year. I will consider that a positive considering some of the weather we have had. We all know though that February can be challenging in itself. Let's hope the groundhog doesn't see his shadow so we can have an early spring.

Our winter sports have moved past the halfway point and we will be preparing for tournament play soon. If you want a sign of spring, our track and field, baseball and softball teams have begun conditioning.

We currently have some renovations happening at Payne Elementary, specifically the auditorium. We are updating our sound and lighting systems and dry walling the walls. We will also be adding a fresh coat of paint to the walls before installing new soundboards. This will vastly improve our auditorium and the experience for our students and their performances.

Both our Payne and Grover Hill Elementary buildings offer preschool education. This is for students that are three or four years old and they attend two days a week for a full day. Our Preschool registration is now open. Please contact Mrs. Taylor Ordway at tordway@wbesc.com or call (419)587-3414 ext. 312.

Both of our elementary buildings are also fortunate to provide both Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and traditional Kindergarten. Transitional Kindergarten supports older four-year-olds and young five-year-olds who are nearly ready for kindergarten but need more time to develop the social, emotional, and foundational academic skills for success. Students are screened and placed in the best possible environment for success. TK/Kindergarten registration begins February 2nd and ends March 31st. Screening days will occur in April. Please contact the building secretary at either Payne or Grover Hill Elementary in interested in having your child screened.

Wayne Trace School continue to be a great place to learn! If you have questions, please do not hesitate in contacting your son/daughter's teachers or administration. We will continuously strive to provide the best education to our student. Please be safe and stay healthy! **Go Raiders!**

### From the Treasurer's Desk...

Did you know you can access a district profile report also called the Cupp Report for Wayne Trace Local Schools? The report is published on the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce website.

The link is <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Finance-and-Funding/School-Payment-Reports/District-Profile-Reports/FY2025-District-Profile-Report>. You can also find the report on the district's website [waynetrace.org](http://waynetrace.org) under the Board of Education page. The report is very informative on how our district measures up to similar and statewide districts. There are drop down boxes to choose any district in the State to compare to. If you are interested in knowing how the district compares in revenues, expenditures, valuation, personnel and demographics, take a look at the report. I believe you will be pleasantly surprised how Wayne Trace Local Schools measures up. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the treasurer's office at [davisl@waynetrace.org](mailto:davisl@waynetrace.org) or (419)263-2415 ext. 102.



Scan QR code to download report

### Grover Hill Building Update...

Grover Hill Elementary will hold their kindergarten screening days on April 6th and 7th. Please contact Mrs. Candi Brimmer at [brimmerc@waynetrace.org](mailto:brimmerc@waynetrace.org) or call (419)587-3414 ext. 300 if you have questions or are interested in signing your child up. Our school community is thriving, and we look forward to more great moments ahead! Please join us:

February 2<sup>nd</sup> - TK/K registra-



Paulding Cardinals vs. Raider Staff game  
Friday, January 16, 2026



tion begins

February 27<sup>th</sup> - Preschool Registration Closes

March 12<sup>th</sup> - STEAM Night 5:30-7pm

March 16-20<sup>th</sup> - Spring Break

March 26<sup>th</sup> - Preschool Screening

March 31<sup>st</sup> - TK/K registration closes

April 2<sup>nd</sup> - Spring Program 2pm and 7pm

April 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> - TK/K Screening

May 22<sup>nd</sup> - Kindergarten Celebration

### Payne Building Update...

The students and staff at Payne Elementary are off to a fantastic start after the break. In mid-February, students will celebrate their 100th day of school, and the student council has organized some exciting upcoming events. Mark your calendars for the Father-Daughter Dance on March 12th and the Mother-Son event on April 17th. Additionally, the PTO will host a Mom-to-Mom Sale on April 11th. A special shout out goes to Mr. Bill Childs, who retired on January 1st after an impressive 38 years with the district. **Go Raiders!**

### Jr/Sr High School Building Update...

It was very nice to welcome our students back from winter break. Our students continue to prepare themselves for success in the classroom between concerts, games and matches. The second semester is underway, and we are excited to get back to school.

As semester testing begins, it serves to remind us that our students will be taking the required Ohio end-of-course tests. As we make our way into the second semester and into the spring state testing, this and further informa-

tion is worth noting again. The required end-of-course tests are in the following areas: 7th and 8th grade Math and Language Arts, 8th grade Science, English II, Algebra I, Geometry, American History, American Government and Biology. Testing will occur around mid to late April. We will keep you informed as testing time draws nearer.

March 6, 7, and 8 will be the annual high school musical performance of "Something Rotten". The musical will be held at the Payne Elementary School Auditorium. Our very talented director and students are busy preparing for this year's performance, so please consider attending one of their performances.

Our Spring Break is scheduled for March 16-20 this year.

The school continues its monthly Food Distribution Program, assisting 103 families (494 Raiders) so far this year. Donations are being accepted to help continue the program.

**Go Raiders!**



### MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Wayne Trace Local School District is to prioritize the philosophy of One District-One-Mission-One Vision. Wayne Trace is committed to educational excellence that will help all students achieve at their highest level and to graduate with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become thinking, productive citizens in a changing global society, this is accomplished through a system which supports community values and integrates community, technology, and educational resources delivered in a safe environment by a caring staff.

**STRONG OFFENSIVE PLAY LIFTS WAYNE TRACE PAST HICKSVILLE AT THE PALACE**



**On a fast break of a turnover senior Carter Clemens runs the ball half court, jumping and dunking for two quick points for the Raiders! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)**

The Wayne Trace Raiders turned in a strong offensive performance on Friday, January 16, rolling to a 71-41 Green Meadows Conference boys basketball win over the Hicksville Aces at The Palace.

Wayne Trace placed five players in double figures and showcased depth throughout the lineup. Lance Maenle led the Raiders with 15 points, while Carter Clemens followed with 13. Lane Weninger scored 12 points, and Tanner Laukhuf finishing with 11 points. Zach Stoller chipped in six points, while Caden Sinn and Blake Noggle added five apiece as the Raiders steadily built separation.

Hicksville was led offensively by Collin Leavell and Jesus Avalos, who each scored 11 points. Luke Eicher also reached double figures with 10 points for the Aces, who battled but struggled to match Wayne Trace's scoring depth.

The win improved Wayne



**Aces Junior Vincent Van Horn gets the rebound, struggles to shoot, and scores for Hicksville. More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)**

Trace to 6-6 overall and 2-1 in GMC play, while Hicksville dropped to 3-11 on the season and 0-3 in conference action.

**LINCOLNVIEW PULLS AWAY LATE TO DEFEAT ANTWERP**



**Antwerp sophomore Brayden Fuller enters the key with defense guarding. He backs up, shoots and scores for another two points for the Archers! More pictures at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)**

The Lincolnview Lancers used a strong second half to pull away from the Antwerp Archers, earning a 70-48 boys basketball win on Saturday,

January 17. After a competitive first half, Lincolnview took control over the final two quarters, outscoring Antwerp 44-20 to improve to 12-2 on the season.

Marshall Hammons led Lincolnview with a game-high 22 points, including three three-pointers, while Chayse Overholt added 18 points. Max Hammons chipped in 12, and Jackson Ingledue and Gavin Evans scored six points apiece as the Lancers spread the scoring throughout the lineup.

Antwerp was led by Zaine McMichael, who finished with 19 points, knocking down five three-pointers. Noah Lucas added nine points, while Corbin Sargent contributed eight. Hampton Rogge scored six points, and Lincoln Lucas, Michael Rohrs, and Brayden Fuller each added two as the Archers battled but could not keep pace down the stretch.

In junior varsity action, Lincolnview defeated Antwerp 43-29.

**PAULDING HOLDS OFF EDGERTON FOR 32-28 GMC ROAD WIN**

The Paulding Panthers survived a tough road test Thursday night at Edgerton, edging the Edgerton Bulldogs 32-28 in a hard-fought Green Meadows Conference matchup.

Paulding built an early advantage behind strong defensive

play, taking a 10-9 lead after the first quarter and extending it to 16-9 early in the second. Edgerton answered with a strong run before halftime, outscoring the Panthers 10-6 in the second quarter to take a narrow 19-16 lead into the break.

The teams traded baskets in a physical third quarter, with Edgerton holding a 26-21 edge heading into the final period.

Paulding responded with its best quarter of the night when it mattered most, limiting the Bulldogs to just two points in the fourth while scoring 11 of its own to secure the four-point victory.

Tori Schlatter led Paulding with 10 points, providing key scoring down the stretch. Addison Pease finished with seven points, while Kate Manz added six and Estie Pease chipped in five. Myrriah Manz and Kayleigh Dunham each contributed two points as Paulding spread the scoring throughout the lineup.

Edgerton was led by Alivia Farnham with 11 points, while Katilyn Burke added seven and Ava Swank finished with five. Despite holding Paulding to single-digit scoring in two quarters, the Bulldogs were unable to generate offense late against the Panthers' defensive pressure.

With the win, Paulding improved to 16-1 overall and remained unbeaten in the Green Meadows Conference at 5-0, while Edgerton slipped to 11-5 overall and 4-1 in conference play.

**FAIRVIEW PULLS AWAY FROM ANTWERP FOR 66-37 GMC WIN**

Fairview set the pace early, building a 17-10 lead after the first quarter and extending the advantage with a 23-8 second period to take a 40-18 lead into halftime. The Lady Apaches continued to control the tempo in the second half, outscoring Antwerp 15-7 in the third quarter before closing out the game in the fourth.

Antwerp was led by Eliana Hormann, who finished with 10 points. Clara Rohrs added six points, while Raeley Franklin and Gabi Snyder each scored six. Briley Bagley chipped in five points as the Lady Archers worked to find offensive rhythm against Fairview's defensive pressure.

Fairview's offense was paced by Nevaeh Heisler, who led all scorers with 22 points. Aubrey Hammer followed with 11 points, while Brianna Moninger added 10. Sammy Mavis scored nine points, and Samantha Coolman finished with eight as Fairview spread its scoring across the lineup.

Despite the loss, Antwerp continued to battle throughout the night, scoring 12 points in the fourth quarter. Fairview improved to 13-3 overall and remained unbeaten in the GMC at 5-0, while Antwerp slipped to 6-12 overall and 1-4 in conference play.

**PAULDING DEFENSE, BALANCED SCORING POWER WIN AT AYERSVILLE**

The Paulding Panthers turned in a strong all-around performance on Friday, January 16, defeating the Ayersville Pilots 54-37 on the road.

Paulding placed several players in the scoring column and shot efficiently as a team, finishing at 46.5 percent from the field while holding Ayersville to just 23.6 percent shooting. Blake Rhonehouse led all scorers with 18 points, knocking down three three-pointers and shooting better than 50 percent from the floor. T Manz added 13 points, including a perfect night at the free-throw line, while Xander Kuckuck chipped in 12 points with a mix of inside baskets and perimeter shooting.

J Manz contributed four points, and Z Barton added two, as Paulding spread the offense

and consistently found quality looks. The Panthers also controlled the glass with a 34-26 rebounding advantage and recording 12 assists, reflecting strong ball movement throughout the night.

Ayersville was led by Lloyd with nine points, Peake with eight, Ewers with six, Dunn with five, Stombaugh with four, and Wolfrum with three. Several Pilots found it difficult to get shots to fall against Paulding's defensive pressure. The Panthers forced tough looks from the perimeter and limited second-chance opportunities, helping them pull away as the game progressed.

With the win, Paulding improved to 9-3 on the season, while Ayersville slipped to 6-5.

**PAULDING PULLS AWAY LATE TO DEFEAT DELPHOS JEFFERSON**

The Paulding Panthers used a fast start and steady scoring to secure a 65-49 boys basketball victory over the Delphos Jefferson Wildcats on Friday, January 17, in a road contest hosted by Delphos Jefferson.

Paulding jumped out early behind an aggressive opening quarter and maintained control throughout the night, answering a third-quarter push by Delphos Jefferson with timely baskets and solid defense down the stretch.

Blake Rhonehouse led all scorers with 22 points, connecting on six two-point field goals and a pair of three-pointers to pace the Panthers. Xander Kuckuck added a strong inside presence with 12 points, while Jalen Manz finished with nine. Max Daeger also contributed nine points, giving Paulding balanced production across the lineup.

Delphos Jefferson was led by Gavin Howell with 14 points, while Isaac Rostorfer added 12. Kellen Carder chipped in six, and Luke Rode and Jace Harter scored five points apiece for the Wildcats, who moved to 5-7 on the season.

Paulding's ability to score from multiple positions and limit second-chance opportunities proved to be the difference as the Panthers closed out another conference win.

**EDGERTON HOLDS OFF ANTWERP IN GMC BOYS BASKETBALL CLASH**

The Edgerton Bulldogs used a strong fourth-quarter push to pull away from the Antwerp Archers, earning a 66-56 Green Meadows Conference boys basketball win on Friday, January 16, in Edgerton.

Edgerton jumped out to an early lead before Antwerp responded with a strong second quarter to close the gap. The Bulldogs regained control late, outscoring the Archers 27-20 in the final period to secure the conference victory and improve to 8-6 overall and 2-1 in GMC play.

Zaine McMichael led Antwerp with a standout performance, pouring in 29 points while connecting on eight field goals, four three-pointers, and converting from the free-throw line. Noah Lucas added 12 points, while Hampton Rogge finished with eight. Lincoln Lucas and Brayden Fuller rounded out the scoring for the Archers, who fell to 3-10 overall and 0-3 in the GMC.

Edgerton was paced by Noah Weaver, who scored a game-high 22 points. Maddox Baker followed with 13 points, while Kellen Sanchez added 11.

**PAULDING SWEEP PARKWAY, FAIRVIEW IN TRI-MEET**



**Civil Pumphrey keeps the score running up until she just nearly wins on points and then decides to pin her opponent. More pictures of the meet at [engagingexposures.com](http://engagingexposures.com)**

The Paulding boys and girls wrestling teams put together an impressive showing on their home mats Tuesday, January 20, earning dual meet victories over both Parkway and Fairview in a successful tri-meet at Paulding.

Competing in front of a home crowd, Paulding wrestlers delivered strong performances across multiple weight classes, securing wins against both visiting programs through a combination of pins, decisions, and hard-fought bouts.

Several Panthers turned in unbeaten nights. Magdiel Lopez, Hunter Webb, Adon Zacarias, Landon Dasher, Stroker Etter, Trenton Bail, and Owen Workman each finished 2-0 on the evening, helping power Paulding to the team sweep. Lopez and Webb controlled their matches with consistent offense, while Dasher and Etter continued to build momentum with deci-

sive victories.

Other key contributors included Civil Pumphrey, Harley Troyer, Kay Burch, Miracle Omonayin, Michael Griffith, and Izaac Coutts, all of whom went 1-0 in their matches. Their wins added valuable points and depth to Paulding's lineup throughout the night.

Paulding also saw solid efforts from Jezaih Seba Fuentes, Landon Shartzler, Leonel Reyes, and Ivan Martinez, each finishing 1-1 while facing tough competition from Parkway and Fairview.

With balanced contributions from both the boys and girls squads, Paulding showcased its depth, preparation, and determination, making the most of the home-mat advantage. The sweep marked a strong statement performance as the Panthers continue through the heart of their wrestling season.

**ANTWERP LADY ARCHERS IMPRESS AT PATRICK HENRY INVITATIONAL**



**Showing off their medals are Archers Cami McAlexander, Maddilan Doster and Kaira Jones.**

The Antwerp Lady Archers junior high and high school wrestling teams turned in a strong performance at the Patrick Henry Invitational on Saturday, January 17, earning multiple podium finishes and placing third overall at the high school level in a 26-team field.

In junior high action, Ade-lynn Slattman recorded a 3-2 finish on the day, earning three pins while competing against a tough slate of oppo-

nents.

The high school Lady Archers delivered several standout performances. Camryn McAlexander captured a first-place finish with a perfect 3-0 record, securing all three wins by pin. Maddilan Doster also claimed a championship, going 2-0 with two pins. Kaira Jones earned a third-place finish after posting a 3-1 record with three pins. Aleta Sorrell finished 2-2 with one pin, while Teagen Eaton placed fifth after going 0-2.

Mason Elden and Brady Everetts each chipped in nine points as the Bulldogs placed five players in the scoring column.

In junior varsity action, Antwerp earned a 43-31 win over Edgerton.

Strong individual performances across the brackets propelled the Antwerp Lady Archers to a third-place team finish out of 26 schools, highlighting the continued growth and success of the girls wrestling program.

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**WRESTLING PLACES 6TH AT BROOKVILLE INVITATIONAL**



The Wayne Trace wrestling team turned in a strong performance at the Brookville Invitational on January 17, earning a sixth-place team finish with five of seven Raiders placing in their respective weight classes.

Junior Colton Kimmel led the way with a runner-up finish at 120 pounds. Kimmel opened his day with a 1:33 pin over Bryson Murdock of Brookville, followed by a 5:03 fall against Joseph Valazquez of Dixie in the quarterfinals. He secured his spot in the championship bout with a lightning-quick 27-second pin over Valley View's Jason Young. Kimmel ultimately fell to Belmont's Breyshawn Snyder by a 20-3 score in the finals.

Freshman Camden Kimmel earned third place at 106 pounds. He started strong with a 17-1 tech fall over Madison's Brodie Young and a 1:40 pin of Kolton Ellis from Clinton-Massie. After being pinned in the semifinals by Clinton-Massie's Carson Wissinger, Kimmel battled back through the consolation bracket, pinning Young again in 2:06 and securing third place with a 37-second fall over Fairborn's Marcus Watts.

Freshman Brandon Hire also claimed third place, competing at 113 pounds. After two byes, Hire dropped his opening match to Robert Allen of Preble Shawnee by fall in 1:10. He rebounded

with a 1:39 pin over Marcus Burckhard of Tri-County North and closed out his day with a 2:48 pin of Clinton-Massie's Kaiden Sherwood in the consolation finals.

At 132 pounds, junior Ben Gurney finished fourth. Following a first-round bye, Gurney pinned Levi Hoppe of Dayton Christian in just 46 seconds before falling by tech fall (19-0) to Milton-Union's Seth Lowry. He responded with a 36-second pin of Brookville's Braylon Slaton to reach the placement match, where he was pinned by Hunter Foss of Valley View.

Freshman Nathan Benschneider rounded out the Raider placers with a fifth-place finish at 150 pounds. After a first-round bye, Benschneider was pinned by Brookville's Xavier Hummel but advanced through the consolation bracket with a 13-0 major decision over Milton-Union's Cotton Gambrel. He then dropped a 5-2 match to Madison's Elliott Griffin before securing fifth place with a pin of Cooper Overman from Fort Recovery.

Also competing for Wayne Trace were senior Seth Ross-wurm, who finished the day 2-1, and sophomore Brennan Miller, who went 0-2.

The Raiders continue their season with momentum as they head into upcoming competition.

To start off the year, the members participated in FFA week, with the Annual Pancake Breakfast and Silent Auction to follow. The community is invited to come together to enjoy a meal prepared by the FFA Members and supported by a few community volunteers. During FFA week, members are encouraged to participate in the activities. Bring your truck to school day, drive your tractor to school day, and cookie decorating tend to be the members' favorites.

Throughout the spring, the chapter attends many events like the District Agriscience Fair, the 2026-2027 Officer

**WAYNE TRACE GIRLS TROUNCE TINORA**



Senior Careen Winans has another good night against the Rams. Seen here she runs in wide open to score on this layup. [more pictures on this layup. Open to score on this layup. more pictures on this layup. Open to score on this layup.](http://morepicturesonthislayupexposures.com)

The Wayne Trace Raiders put together a dominant all-around performance Thursday night, January 22, defeating the Tinora Rams 52-20 at Wayne Trace.

Wayne Trace set the tone immediately, holding Tinora scoreless in the first quarter while jumping out to a 16-0 lead. The Raiders continued to build momentum in the sec-

ond quarter, outscoring the Rams 21-6 to take a commanding 37-6 advantage into halftime.

Senior Lexi Moore led all scorers with 18 points, controlling the paint and finishing efficiently inside. Careen Winans followed with 16 points, knocking down three three-pointers and adding steady ball handling on both ends of the floor. Amber Stoller contributed seven points, while Caroline Winans added four as Wayne Trace spread the scoring throughout the lineup.

The Raiders remained in control after halftime, outscoring Tinora 14-10 in the third quarter and limiting the Rams to just four points in the fourth. Wayne Trace's defensive pressure forced turnovers and limited clean shooting looks, allowing the Raiders to cruise to the 32-point win.

Tinora was led by Addison Dominique with seven points, while Ella Homier added five. Despite the effort, the Rams struggled to find consistent offense against Wayne Trace's defensive intensity and rebounding advantage.

With the win, Wayne Trace improved to 13-3 overall and 3-2 in the Green Meadows Conference, continuing a strong stretch of play as the Raiders head deeper into the heart of the season.

Elections, the Spring Contest, the FFA Recognition Banquet, the State FFA Convention, and the Petting Zoo.

Every year, students participate in the District Agriscience Fair. Each student is required to choose a project/experiment to be carried out for the science fair. They must prepare a report, poster, and presentation on their project. This past year, Fairview was represented well by the students who participated.

On March 3, the 2024-2025 Officer Elections were held. The results were as follows: President (Sammy Mavis), Vice President (Kalvin Woodring), Secretary (Addy Zeedyk), Treasurer (Brooklyn Zeedyk), Reporter (Asia Brubaker), Sentinel (Landric VanderMade), Student Advisor (Ethan Guilford), Historian (James Smith).

The Spring Contest consists of many different events that the members can choose to compete in, located at the Fulton County Fairgrounds. The contest is Agronomy, General Livestock, Meat Judging, Nature Interpretations, Poultry, and Wildlife.

A major highlight of the year was the 64th Annual Fairview FFA Member Recognition Banquet, held on April 5 in the Fairview Elementary cafeteria. The banquet served as a celebration of student accomplishments both inside and outside the classroom and provided an opportunity to recognize graduating seniors for their years of dedication to the chapter and the community members who made the year successful. A meal was provided by Nickolas Hill while guests viewed a slideshow of memories from the year, created by Chapter Historian Brooklyn Zeedyk. The evening concluded with a formal ceremony that honored members, supporters, and newly elected officers.

This year at the State Convention, there were many things to celebrate, and many adventures were taken. The chapter had several members receive their State FFA Degrees. These members were: Tasha Crites, Alex Garcia, Rachel Haver, Summer Hiler, Riley Schindler,

James Smith, Landric VanderMade, and Calvin Woodring. Along with this, Sammy Mavis received the Golden Secretary Book Award. It was great to see the chapter represented so well by these individuals. While at the Convention, members also had the opportunity to enjoy activities such as Top Golf, sessions, and the convention center.

As the school year wrapped up, the chapter hosted a petting zoo for the elementary kids to enjoy. There was a variety of farm animals that were brought for the kids to pet, hold, and learn about. Many fun educational activities were provided for the kids to try and interact with.

This summer, the chapter stayed busy preparing for the next school year and the Defiance County Fair at the end of August. During the fair, the chapter helped at the Barn and Grill, competed in the Ag Olympics, and participated in the livestock shows. Many members had success with their projects. Along with this, some of the members served on the Royal Court. Fairview chapter members were Kalvin Woodring (King) and Ruby Elston (Court Attendee).

Community service remained a central focus throughout the year. In September, Fairview FFA members hosted a tailgate party before a home football game, featuring food, yard games, and a dunk tank run by members. This free-will donation event raised \$750, which was donated to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The event helped strengthen relationships between the chapter and the community while supporting an important national cause.

A group of members was fortunate enough to travel to Indianapolis for a few days for the National FFA Convention. They got to sit in on many sessions with great speakers. While they were there, they got to enjoy many industry tours and fun activities. They also got to support four of the Fairview FFA Members who received their American FFA Degrees: Miguel Garcia, Dalton Haver, Brady

**PAULDING JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS, STAFF VOLUNTEER AT CARING AND SHARING FOOD PANTRY**



On Saturday, January 17th students and staff from Paulding Junior High School volunteered at the Caring and Sharing Food Pantry in Paulding, Ohio. Shown in the picture from left are: Mrs. Katelyn LaFountain (7th grade math teacher), Kinsley Pease, Allie Manz, Adalyn Miller, Melissa Ramirez Cortes, and Mrs. Madison Etter (7th grade reading teacher).

**PAULDING WRESTLERS COMPETE AT SPARTAN CLASSIC**



Standout performance from Panther Landon Shartzter, earned a second-place finish in the 120-pound weight class in Toledo.

Members of the Paulding Panthers wrestling team traveled to Toledo on Saturday, January 17, to compete in the Spartan Classic, facing a strong field of wrestlers from across the region. Also on Saturday, the wrestling squad participated in the Adams

Central Invitational in Indiana, with several top performers: Nico Moreno 3rd place at 113 lbs; Landon Dasher 3rd place at 150 lbs; Stroker Etter 3rd place at 165 lbs; Michael Clifford 4th at 165 lbs; Avery Cooper 4th at 190 lbs.

**FAIRVIEW FFA CELEBRATES A YEAR OF LEADERSHIP, SERVICE, AND ACHIEVEMENT**

By: Reporter Asia Brubaker

The Fairview FFA Chapter experienced a successful and impactful 2025-2026 school year, marked by strong leadership, meaningful community involvement, and numerous student achievements. Throughout the year, members demonstrated their commitment to agriculture, service, and personal growth through a wide range of activities and events.

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**NO SWIMMING**

This story appeared in a national magazine in 1964. I assume it's true, as Ronald Reagan said I wasn't there. I did live through that era of history and remember much of it.

As a disclaimer I probably have a conservative bent, only had contact with a union a couple of times. Growing up on a farm, many groups tried to unionize farmers, but farmers are a very independent group, and most would not withhold crops or services from anyone. Never was a fan of riots or protests. There's got to be a better way of solving our problems.

This story took place in June of 1964, I think perhaps June 12th. Betty was a maid at Howard Johnson's. She was just trying to survive. She enjoyed her job, she was good at cleaning, and Mr Jones was a good boss and treated her fairly. She was happy with her life, never demanding anything, only trying to play the cards that were dealt to her. She had gotten the message that everyone feared her husband had been killed in the war. She was happy with her life now, she had her own apartment, and she was able to make things go.

She was a maid at Howard Johnson's motel. She liked to clean and didn't mind work, and her boss was good to her. She nearly finished her last room was 230. As she unlocked the door the smell of cigar smoke was overwhelming. But the sight of the room was worse. Things were strung around, someone had spilled water in the middle of the floor. Lipstick was smeared around, and everything was a mess. There were signs that the occupants had left in a hurry.

Going through the room she found a billfold lying on the dresser. She put it in her pocket, she would deal with it later. She knew who had occupied the room, Mr Ashton was a frequent visitor. He was a well-known man, a shoo-in candidate for mayor. He often brought young girls to the motel even though he had a family at home.

Suddenly there was a commotion at the pool. She could hear shouting and as she looked out she saw a mob gathering and several of the mob had jumped into the pool. Then she heard Mr Jones yelling. They were tearing down the fence at the entrance

to the pool. And then she realized what was taking place. She had heard there was to be a Martin Luther King march in the historic town of Andrews. On the fence by the pool was a sign, "Whites only".

She ran down to the lobby to get a close look at what was going on. She saw Mr Jones standing there dripping with sweat. He answered the phone and she heard him yell, "No, we are not part of a demonstration." and then she saw something that startled her.

Mr Jones had found a bottle of muriatic acid and hurried out to the pool and began dumping it in. White smoke rose, the stench was unbelievable, and people were screaming and running to get away. Then Mr Asian calmly walked over to a valve and started draining the pool. This had been her last room for today so she went back up, hurriedly finished and left.

But something was weighing heavily on her, she still had the billfold. She found a park bench and sat down to examine it. It belonged to Mr Ashton, and she also found a picture of him with a young girl. She, be-leaving what she had to do, several steps away was the newspaper office. She found the room of the editor and barged in.

The editor was an old guy chewing a cigar, she showed him the billfold and the picture. This was clear evidence that Mr Ashton was not the leader that he claimed to be. It was obvious that the girl was young. But to her surprise the editor would not publish it, he would have nothing to do with it, so she left with a burden. But as she went out on the street a plan formed in her head.

The girl was someone she knew. She was a neighbor that she had known forever. Besides that she was a black girl. As she came to the door, she handed her the billfold and asked her why she did it. He had promised her that if he gained power that would be the end of segregation in their town. She hoped It might make things better.

Ruth took the young girl in her arms, and they both stood there sobbing. A burden was lifting from her that she had been carrying most of the day, and Betty also felt a burden lifting. Maybe things would be better, but in the meantime they both would be enjoying life, and working to make everyone's life a bit better.

James Neuhouser

**ANTWERP WRESTLING CLUB HAS GREAT DAY AT FAIRVIEW**

The Antwerp wrestling club opened the GMC tournament series at Fairview High School on Sunday, January 18, 2026. Of the 21 wrestlers competing, 19 of them were able to place in the top 4 of their respective weight classes. Placing 4th on the day were Benson Slatman, Kaydence Woolace, Ensley Parisot, and Bennett Graham. Earning 3rd place finishes were Inigo Diaz, Bryson Perry, and Blade Ruffing. 2nd place finishers for the tournament were Pheelix Slatman, Starlette Ruffing, Maxx Reith, Carl Kosch, Kimber Weible, Wayne Zeilke, Olivia Kosch, and Ulrik Zijlstra. The archers also crowned 4 champions on the day. Destiny Bradford, Sebastian Yanez, Aubree Frost, and Oliver McCague all earned 1st place finishes with undefeated records for the tournament. For Yanez, it marks the first individual tournament championship of his career. Congratulations to all of the young archer wrestlers for their effort and hard work. Be sure to catch them next week at Edgerton in the 2nd tournament of the GMC series. Good luck and GO ARCHERS!!

**WAYNE TRACE EDGES PETTISVILLE IN TIGHT ROAD WIN**

The Wayne Trace Raiders picked up a hard-fought 46-41 boys basketball victory over the Pettisville Blackbirds on Saturday, January 17, in a road contest at Pettisville.

Wayne Trace relied on strong perimeter shooting and balanced contributions to secure the win. Caden Sinn led the Raiders with a game-high 18 points, connecting on six three-pointers to pace the offense. Lance Maenle added 14 points and filled the stat sheet with six assists, while Carter Clemens contributed six points. Tanner Laukhuf and Micah Sinn chipped in three points apiece as the Raiders improved to 7-6 on the season.

Pettisville was led by Creighton Aeschliman with 15 points, while Alex Galvin added 11. Zander Hogrefe scored eight points, and Jack Lepplemeier finished with five as the Blackbirds kept the game close throughout but were unable to overcome Wayne Trace's late execution.

Wayne Trace finished with 11 three-point field goals and moved the ball well, recording 15 assists as a team. Pettisville fell to 8-5 with the loss.

In junior varsity action, Wayne Trace defeated Pettisville 37-34.

**PATROL INVESTIGATING SINGLE VEHICLE FATAL CRASH**

PLEASANT TWP - The Van Wert Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol is investigating a single vehicle fatal crash that occurred on January 16th at 10:31 a.m. in Pleasant Twp., Van Wert County on Marsh Road, near US Route 224.

The preliminary investigation revealed that a 2007 Ford Focus, driven by Jarett Catlin, 33 of Scott, was traveling north bound on Marsh Road. The vehicle traveled off the left side of the roadway, losing control, slid across the center and off the right side of

the roadway, striking a utility pole.

Mr. Catlin suffered fatal injuries as a result of the crash and was pronounced deceased at the scene. Mr. Caitlin was not wearing a seat belt at the time of the crash and alcohol impairment is believed to be a factor in the crash.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol was assisted on scene by the Van Wert Police Department, Van Wert County Coroner's Office, Van Wert EMS and Fire Department, Van Wert County EMA, CERT, Gideon's Towing and AEP Power.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol reminds motorists to always wear their seatbelt, never drive impaired and to consider slowing their driving speeds on snow covered roadways.

The crash remains under investigation.

**VERTICAL FARMING: A LOOK AT THE FUTURE OF FOOD PRODUCTION**

As a new year begins, many people reflect on future possibilities, and agriculture is no exception. Farming is changing rapidly through advances in artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, and data processing. Another significant shift is how food is grown—moving from traditional horizontal farming to vertical systems. Vertical farming involves growing crops in stacked layers, typically using hydroponics and operating within a tightly controlled environment.

The need for alternative farming methods is driven by major global trends. The world's population continues to grow at roughly one percent per year, and by 2050 it is estimated that food production will need to increase by about 50 percent to meet demand. At the same time, nearly 40 percent of arable farmland has been lost over the past four decades due to development, erosion, and other pressures. Housing, roads, and expanding cities continue to replace farmland, while projections show that nearly 80 percent of the global population will live in urban areas by mid-century. Many of these urban centers are already considered food deserts, lacking access to fresh and nutritious produce.

Vertical farming addresses some of these challenges by bringing food production di-

The West Bend News  
**Sudoku Puzzle**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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|   |   | 8 | 6 | 3 |   | 5 |   |   |
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Answers to "Sudoku puzzle on Page 11"

rectly into cities. Crops are now being grown in skyscrapers, warehouses, and even shipping containers located within metropolitan areas. These systems offer several advantages, including the use of approximately 98 percent less water and 99 percent less land compared to conventional farming. Reduced transportation distances also mean fresher produce and lower fuel use. Because crops are grown in controlled environments where light, temperature, humidity, and nutrients are regulated, the risk of disease and pests is significantly reduced, often eliminating the need for herbicides and pesticides.

There are drawbacks as well. Vertical farms require supplemental lighting, heating, and nutrients, and many systems consume large amounts of electricity. Some facilities offset this by maximizing natural light where possible. However, the ability to grow crops year-round without weather-related risks such as droughts or floods remains a major benefit. With multiple harvests annually, one acre of vertical farming space can equal the production of up to 240 acres of traditional farmland, depending on the crop.

While the technology may seem modern, the concept of vertical farming is not new. Hanging gardens were used by ancient civilizations such as the Babylonians and Romans more

than 2,500 years ago. About 1,000 years ago, the Aztecs practiced a form of vertical farming using floating rafts to grow crops in nutrient-rich water. Today's systems rely on precise monitoring to maintain plant health in confined spaces. Seeds are typically started in small areas, then transplanted into stacked growing layers where the micro-environment is fully controlled. Carbon dioxide levels can be increased to enhance photosynthesis, and oxygen can be delivered directly to plant roots to improve growth efficiency.

Beyond food production, vertical farming is also being used in pharmaceutical manufacturing. One facility in Texas operates an 18-story vertical farm producing millions of tobacco-like plants used in the development of drugs and vaccines under highly controlled conditions.

As land degradation continues and technology advances, vertical farming offers a promising complement to traditional agriculture. With increasing use of robotics, AI, and automation, these systems may reduce physical labor demands while helping meet future food needs—on Earth and potentially beyond.

*Submitted from a submitted column by James J. Hoorman, Hoorman Soil Health Services*

**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS**

Sealed proposals will be received by Antwerp Local Schools at, 303 South Harrmann Road, Antwerp, Ohio 45813, until February 19, 2026 at 1:30 PM, at which time and place proposals will be opened publicly and read aloud. Proposals received after February 19, 2026 at 1:30 PM will be returned unopened. Proposals shall be for the furnishing of materials and the performance of labor necessary for the:

25057.00 Antwerp Bus Building Addition and Renovation  
303 South Harrmann Rd, Antwerp, OH 45813  
Antwerp, Ohio, 45813

All in accordance with the Contract Documents prepared by Garmann/Miller & Associates, Inc., Minster, OH | Columbus, OH | Indianapolis, IN | Ft. Wayne, IN

A Lump Sum bid for the project will be received.

A prebid meeting will be held at 10:00.00 AM on February 9, 2026 at Antwerp Local Schools Central Office Conference Room. The pre-bid meeting is not mandatory but bidders are strongly encouraged to attend. The facility will be open for inspection at this time.

A Bid Security in the form of a certified check, cashier's check, irrevocable letter of credit, or surety company bond pursuant to Chapter 1305 of the Ohio Revised code in the amount of 10% of the total bid shall accompany each bid; or a bid guaranty bond in accordance with Chapter 153.571 of the Ohio Revised Code in the amount of 100% of the total bid shall accompany each bid.

The Contract Documents, including Drawings and Specifications, are on file for public inspection at the office of the Architect: Garmann/Miller & Associates Inc., Phone 419-628-4240: the office of the Antwerp Local Schools: Construction News Corporation, the McGraw Hill-Dodge Plan Room, the Builders Exchange and iSqFt.

Contract Documents may be purchased from DC Reprographics, 1254 Courtland Ave, Columbus, Ohio 43201; www.DCplanroom.com; Phone 614-297-1200. Each Bidder is responsible for shipping cost or providing a shipping number for billing to the bidders account.

Each bid must be submitted in duplicate on a blank form furnished by the Architect, in a sealed envelope. Mark plainly on the outside of the envelope, the project you are bidding on. No bidder may withdraw their bid for a period of sixty (60) days after the bid opening

The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive informalities, irregularities and/or errors in the bids to the extent permitted by law. This includes the right to extend the date and time for receipt of bids..

This notice is posted on the Antwerp Local School District web site.

Notice can be accessed at: www.antwepschools.org  
The Date of this notice: January 23, 2026

By: Antwerp Local School District  
303 South Harrmann Road  
Antwerp, Ohio 45813

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## GRANDMA CORE

### Dotting My Teas

By: Marlene Oxender

After being told that the décor in my home is back in style once again, I wondered when it happened. And why it happened.

I learned that decorating with colors, fabrics, and items that make a home appear as if a grandmother lives there is officially defined as “Grandma Core,” and it’s a popular trend right now. Because I’ve always had an interest in antiques and vintage items, my home took on a grandmotherly look well before its time.

I read an article that explained that Grandma Core is back in style because of the renewed desire to connect with the charm of simpler times. Charm that’s reminiscent of a grandmother’s home. How flattering.

I have a friend who likes to work in her kitchen, and I envy her enthusiasm. When she admits to her love for washing dishes, I hear a declaration in her voice. A genuine affirmation. Her approach and attitude are inspiring.

So here we are – living life moment by moment. As soon as we’re done living one moment, we move on to the next. And then another. Moments pass so quickly.

If you’re a Grandma Core grandmother, you have a vintage-looking watch on your wrist, and it tells you what moment you’re living in. Although some days seem to tick away faster than others, the only place we can live is in the moment. And all our moments take place in the now. If you don’t agree, please contact me, we’ll go out for lunch and figure this out.

When we think about an abundant life, we know that abundance makes itself known in many ways. Our mood, our thought life, our love for others – all part of living in the moment. All reflec-

tive of abundance.

In many homes, the cookie cutters come out in February, and the best cookies that could ever be made in our kitchen – are made. Only after we spend time making the dough and rolling it out will a tray of heart-shaped cookies go in the oven. And it’s best to bring the cookies out of the oven at the perfect moment.

I started making roll out cookies in high school, so I’ve perfected them over the years. I’ve shared the Kindergarten Sugar Cookie recipe many times, along with the tips and tricks that make them good. The recipe was published two weeks ago in this column. And it can always be found at dottingmyteas.com by clicking on to The Good News Newspaper story.

When we’re a child, it’s easy to come up with a wish list. Christmas morning is full of fun moments when we open gifts and play with new toys. But when we’re older, there are fewer ideas for those who’d like to buy a gift for us.

This past Christmas, it was cookies-to-the-rescue when my husband received a package of homemade roll out cookies from our daughters. A gift such as that never goes out of style and is something a grandfather is happy to receive. It’s a Grandpa Core kind of gift.

One good thing about living in the moment is the way it makes time take care of itself. We can choose a task that may seem overwhelming and break it down into manageable moments. As we do dishes. As we wrap gifts. As we bake cookies. It’s a decision we make – be joyful or not be joyful. Moments are never wasted. Moments just teach us the art of living. It’s in style once again. To the core.

**Marlene Oxender is a writer, speaker, and author. She writes about growing up in the small town of Edgerton, her ten siblings, the memorabilia in her parents’ estate, and her late younger brother, Stevie Kimpel, who was born with Down syndrome. Her three published books, Picket Fences, Stevie and Grandma, You Already Am Old, are available on Amazon. Marlene can be reached at mpoxender@gmail.com**

## PAULDING COUNTY COURT RECORDS

### Criminal/Traffic

#### Disposition Report

**Jeremy E. Shaffer** of Oakwood, OH, pled guilty to one

count of disorderly conduct and was fined \$100, plus court costs. A second count of disorderly conduct was dismissed. The court ordered him to pay all fines and costs and to maintain general good behavior.

**Christina M. McKeever** of Antwerp, OH, entered a no contest plea to disorderly conduct and was found guilty. She was fined \$50, with \$105 of the fine suspended, and assessed \$392 in total costs. She is also required to maintain general good behavior.

**Kenneth Redman** of Ottawa, OH, pled guilty to reckless operation and was fined \$250, sentenced to 30 days in jail with 27 days suspended, and had his license suspended from July 5, 2025, to January 5, 2026. The court noted the license suspension was deemed served, the ALS was vacated, and Redman may attend a driver intervention program in lieu of three days in jail. A separate charge of operating a vehicle under the influence (OVI) was dismissed along with a turn signal violation.

**Lisa Renee Millott** of Crawfordsville, Indiana, was found guilty of driving under suspension. She was fined \$150 with \$105 in court costs. A related speeding charge was also recorded but is omitted here.

**Gary W. Woods** of Clio, Michigan, was convicted on four counts of vehicular manslaughter. For each count, he received a \$150 fine with \$75 suspended and was sentenced to 90 days in jail. His license was suspended for two years beginning May 1, 2026. Additional conditions include paying all fines and costs and maintaining good behavior. Woods was also cited for failure to control and fined \$70 with \$105 in court costs, and marked lanes with a fine of \$70.

**Anna M. Conley** of Antwerp was found guilty of operating a vehicle under the influence. She was fined \$1,040 and sentenced to 180 days in jail, with 150 days suspended. Her driver’s license is suspended from July 26, 2025, to July 26, 2027. She must also pay \$105 in court costs and comply with multiple special conditions, including standard probation, an evaluation with Westwood, 20 hours of community service, participation in various alcohol education and court-related programs, random alcohol and drug screening, and refraining from alcohol and bar attendance.

**Kamariyon L. Robinson** of Fort Wayne was found guilty of a seat belt violation. He was fined \$30 and ordered to pay \$62 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

**Jaime R. Matthews-Rhoad** of Cecil was found guilty of disorderly conduct. She was fined \$75 and ordered to pay \$112 in court costs. The court required her to pay all fines and costs and maintain general good behavior.

**Justin R. Flores** of Defiance was found guilty of operating a vehicle under the influence and was fined \$1,040. He received a 180-day jail sentence with 120 days suspended and had his license suspended from February 1, 2026, to February 1, 2029. He is required to use restricted plates and undergo an evaluation with Westwood.

**Miguel A. Amadis** of Raeford, North Carolina, was found guilty of operating an unsafe vehicle and was fined \$150 plus court costs.

**Henry R. Nymann** of Seymour, Indiana, was found guilty of failure to control and was fined \$70 plus court costs.

**Alyssa M. Gent** of Van Wert was found guilty of driv-

ing while texting. The case was waived by the defendant, and she was fined \$95 with no additional costs or license suspensions.

**Joshua L. Carlisle** of Paulding was found guilty of driving under suspension. He was fined \$250, sentenced to 30 days in jail (suspended), and ordered to pay \$97 in court costs.

**Laurel W. Baer Jr.** of Bryan was found guilty of failing to display plates. He was fined \$70 and paid \$95 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

**Robert F. Davis Jr.** of Paulding was cited for a seat belt violation. He was fined \$30 and paid \$57 in court costs. This case was also waived by the defendant.

## OHIO’S 2026 MUZZLELOADER DEER HUNTING SEASON RESULTS

Hunters harvested 13,055 white-tailed deer during Ohio’s four-day muzzleloader season, which ended Tuesday, Jan. 6, according to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife. The total includes deer taken with muzzleloader and archery equipment during the season. Archery hunting remains open through Sunday, Feb. 1.

The muzzleloader harvest was slightly lower than last year’s total of 13,495 deer and near the three-year average of 13,269. Of the deer checked, 3,473 were antlered (27%) and 9,582 were antlerless (73%), including 7,924 does, 1,418 button bucks, 143 bucks with shed antlers, and 97 bucks with antlers under three inches. The top counties for muzzleloader harvest were Coshocton (557), Tuscarawas (491), Carroll (451), Muskingum (437), Knox (393), Harrison (391), Licking (388), Columbiana (375), Guernsey (356), and Jefferson (299).

As of Jan. 6, hunters statewide have checked 222,648 deer during the 2025–26 season, marking the fourth consecutive year Ohio’s harvest has surpassed 200,000. Season totals include 99,551 deer taken during archery season, 9,759 during youth gun season, 84,448 during the regular gun season, and 15,835 during the additional gun weekend. A total of 124,104 deer have been harvested with firearms, including controlled hunts.

ODNR continues to promote venison donation programs, partnering with Ohio Penal Industries at the Pickaway Correctional Institution and Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry. To date, more than 3,870 pounds of processed venison has been donated. On average, a deer yields about 50 pounds of meat, totaling more than 11 million pounds of venison statewide this season.

Deer harvest totals are lower than average in Athens, Meigs, Morgan, and Washington counties due to an outbreak of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD), which led to reduced bag limits in those areas. ODNR has issued 421,314 deer permits this season, with Pennsylvania, Michigan, North Carolina, New York, and West Virginia leading in non-resident licenses sold.



Bobby Pierce No32 gets his first win in 2026. Campbell Photography stock photo.

## THE LEFT TURN

By: Ron Burt

The SageNet Center, TULSA, Okla. (January 17, 2026) The Chili Bowl Nationals, never disappoint and this year 387 drivers went to Tulsa to compete in the 40th annual Chili Bowl. Twenty one year old Franklin Indiana’s Emerson Axsom, the 21-year-old from parked the Kevin and Jo Swindell No. 39a in Victory Lane for the first time at the Bowl.

He chased pole sitter, Kyle Larson, through the first four laps, Axsom carried a wave of momentum into the first and second turns as the pair worked Lap 4. Into traffic with 39 laps to go, tragedy struck Larson as he came up on a slowed C.J. Leary at the exit of the second turn, the contact sent race leader Larson flipping.

This caution and restart put Swindell-backed cars first and second, Logan Seavey had company quickly with Justin Grant throwing sliders, until one nearly wrecked his night with 24 laps to go. Getting tighter among the top three with 16 go to, Seavey looked low with nothing there, but this opened the door for Justin Grant to take over second.

Down the final eight laps, Justin Grant was in second, and in the hunt with a massive slide through turns one and two, only to have a caution appear, and reset the field. Working through several cautions in the closing laps, the runner-up spot was again in the mix, with the caution flying for Grant getting toppled in Turn 3. This caution set up a white, checkered finish, but the team drivers Axsom and Seavey could not fend off the charge that was coming. The wave of the white flag and one lap to go, the battle was far from over as 18th-starting Kevin Thomas rolled the inside line. Right there as the pair came to the final turns, Axsom made a quick adjustment to block the No. 14k and this let Hank

Davis slip by for third, with Logan Seavey and Briggs Danner completing the top five.

Jett Barnes was named the 2026 Chili Bowl Rookie of the Year. He was the only event rookie to make the 24-car field.

The 2027 Chili Bowl Nationals powered by NOS Energy Drink will take place January 11-16, 2027, inside the SageNet Center at Expo Square. Tulsa, Okla. If you’ve never been and like racing this needs to be on your bucket list. Drivers in every type of racing show up Asphalt, Dirt, World of Outs Laws, Dirt Late Models, NASCAR, Midgets, Modifieds, they all want Driller bragging rights.

I just received a press release that Cale Coons will compete for Rookie of the Year honors with the USAC AMSOIL Sprint Car National Championship in 2026. The 17-year-old will pilot the Dooling / Curb-Agajanian #63 on the full 55-race tour. Locally he competed in the USAC D2 Midwest Thunder Midgets.

Two Time World of Outlaws Late Model Champion, Bobby Pirece won the 50 lap Wild West Shootout at Central Arizona Raceway and took home \$25,000.00. The was the final race in the mini-series and his only feature win. Next stop will be Florida. The 2026 racing season has started.

The 2026 World of Outlaws Late Model season, featuring 61 races across 19 states, kicked off in January at Volusia Speedway Park and runs through November, highlighting big purses at major events like the USA Nationals at Cedar Lake Speedway (July 30-Aug 1) and the season finale at The Dirt Track at Charlotte (Nov 4-7). Key stops include Fairbury (July 24-25) and Boothill Speedway (Oct 2-3) with \$50k+ payouts, plus new venues and returning favorites, aiming for nearly \$5 million in Feature purses. Until next week, keep your wheels down. Ron out!

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✉ [info@westbendnews.net](mailto:info@westbendnews.net) to request our current advertising guidelines.



**PAULDING COUNTY DEMOCRATS HONOR FAMILIES THROUGH PARK DONATION**



The regular monthly meeting began at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 13th at the Paulding Eagles. The roll call, financial report and the minutes of the November meeting were read and approved.

Old business discussion was opened by chairman, George Geyer. Viola Copeland and Rebecca Geyer were the co-authors of the newly adopted mission statement for the organization. It was approved and is as follows:

The Paulding County Democrat's mission is to preserve and strengthen democracy and to create a lasting change embedded in fairness, equality and mutual respect through continuous support of honest elections and responsible governing for all Americans.

Jack Bumble was voted in as Precinct Trustee for Benton Township. Michael Porter was approved as member at-large.

The Defiance County Democratic Men's dinner will be held at the Defiance UAW Hall in Defiance on March 14th at 5:00 p.m. Paulding County is

invited. Tickets are available from our Chairmen. A MEET THE CANDIDATE night is also set for Monday, February 16th at the UAW Hall in Defiance from 5:30 until 8:30 for Paulding and Defiance Counties.

New business included making a \$200 donation to the Paulding Park District, Inc. in honor of all children and families. Pictured are Pam Boatright, Park Treasurer of the Park Board, George Geyer and Linda Hodges, Chairwoman of the Park Board.

The next meeting is Tuesday, February 10th at 7:00 p.m. at the Paulding Eagles.

Public is welcome.

**ANTWERP POLICE REPORTS**

January 8 — A car parked on Cleveland Street was reported to the Antwerp Police Department. Upon arrival, the officer located the vehicle and its owner. The owner moved the vehicle into a driveway.

January 9 — A resident requested assistance borrowing jumper cables to start a vehicle.

**Classified Ads**

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- Classified ads are \$8.50 for 20 words or less and \$.15 for each additional word.
- Bold is \$1.00 additional.**
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**RAIN TECH SEAMLESS GUTTERS, 419-258-1818 2-4**

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**MOWER LIFT FOR SALE:** Huskee HZR350 Lift for riding or zero turn lawn mower. \$650bo. Call 419-258-0127

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**FIELD REPORTS FROM OHIO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE OFFICERS**

**Central Ohio - Wildlife District One**

During the 2025 white-tailed deer gun hunting week, State Wildlife Officer Brian Motsinger, assigned to Union County, received information from a landowner regarding a hunting without permission incident. Officer Motsinger responded and, with the assistance of the landowner's family, located four individuals who were hunting without permission. Officer Motsinger contacted the suspects, and following the investigation and court proceedings four individuals were found guilty of hunting without permission. One hunter was also cited for hunting without a valid nonresident hunting license.

In fall 2025, State Wildlife Officer Josh Elster, assigned to Pickaway County, was contacted by an agriculture teacher at a local school who was interested in teaching a white-tailed deer butchering clinic for the class. Officer Elster coordinated the use of a roadkill deer for the clinic with the assistance of a local deer processor. Officer Elster attended the clinic and spoke with the students while they learned how to process and cook venison. The deer's hide was given to a local taxidermist to use on a mount for a deer harvested during a disabled veterans hunt the previous week.

**Northwest Ohio - Wildlife District Two**

On the opening day of mourning dove hunting season, State Wildlife Officer Matt D. Smith, assigned to Huron County, observed five dove hunters in a cut wheat field. Officer Smith met them at their vehicles to perform a basic hunting compliance check. Officer Smith discovered the group had exceeded the daily bag limit for mourning doves, hunted migratory birds over bait, and hunted migratory birds with a gun capable of holding more than three shells. The group had harvested 32 more doves than their combined daily bag limit. In total, the group paid \$5,350 in restitution and \$1,420 in fines and court costs. A total of 48 months of probation and 100 days of jail, suspended, were issued. Each individual's hunting privileges were revoked for one year. The doves were forfeited and do-

**THREE INJURED WHEN COMMERCIAL SEMI STRIKES HOUSE**

Richland Township - On January 21, 2026, at approximately 2:47 P.M., the Lima Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol responded to a report of a commercial semi-truck striking a home in Richland Township in Allen County.

Gerry Bright, age 55, from Frankfort, Indiana was operating a 2022 Volvo Semi west-bound on US 30. The vehicle went off the right side of the roadway, struck a guardrail, and a fence. The semi then struck a house, causing it to partially collapse, before damaging three parked vehicles. Mr. Bright suffered non-life threatening injuries and was transported from the scene by Beaverdam Richland EMS to Lima Memorial Hospital.

Lawrence Myers, age 51, and

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8 6 4 1 7 5 2 9 3

**Sudoku solution from page 9**

Blake Vires, age 21, both from Lima, Ohio were inside the house when it was struck. They both suffered non-life threatening injuries and were transported to Mercy Health St. Rita's Hospital by Beaverdam Richland EMS.

The semi sustained severe damage and was towed from the scene by Minich Towing. The crash remains under investigation.

nated to Back to the Wild, a wildlife rehabilitation facility.

State Wildlife Officer Levi Farley, assigned to Paulding County, State Wildlife Officer Supervisor Troy Reimund, and Fish Management Unit Leader Brad Agler spoke with students at Paulding High School for a career day. They discussed the wide variety of careers in the Ohio Division of Wildlife. Officer Farley spoke to about 100 students about his job duties and the requirements to become a wildlife officer.

**Northeast Ohio - Wildlife District Three**

In September 2025, State Wildlife Officer Aaron Brown, assigned to Wayne County, and Wildlife Officer Supervisor Eric Bear attended the annual Badges n' Bobbers event. The event is organized by the Wooster Police Department and draws dozens of children from the community. A local bait shop provided bait, and a local fish hatchery provided fish to catch. With grants provided by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and other donations, the children were treated to snacks, fishing rods, and a chance to win outdoor prizes.

**Southwest Ohio - Wildlife District Five**

During the summer of 2025, State Wildlife Officers Brad Turner, assigned to Preble County, and Jake Losekamp, assigned to Hamilton County, observed three adults fishing on the bank of the Great Miami River. Officers Turner and Losekamp observed the individuals leave beverage bottles and bait containers on the banks of river, and one individual discarded items into the river. All three individuals received summonses for litter. Each was found guilty in Hamilton City Municipal Court and paid \$75 in fines and \$91 in court costs.

State Wildlife Officers Isaiah Gifford, assigned to Clinton County, Alex Almeter, assigned to Greene County, and District Five Law Operations Manager Jason Keller, along with K-9 Officer Scout, recently attended a hunter education class at the Spring Valley Wildlife Area education center. The officers highlighted wildlife conservation and safe, ethical hunting, and answered questions from students. The course had approximately 50 attendees. Hunter and trapper education programs are designed for every age and ability and are run by some of Ohio's most knowledgeable hunters and trappers.

**Southeast Ohio - Wildlife District Four**

State Wildlife Officer Cole Tilton, assigned to Guernsey County, received information during the 2025 white-tailed deer gun hunting season that people were hunting on private property without permission. Officer Tilton and State

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Financial Report for the Village of Grover Hill, Ohio, for Fiscal Year 2025, has been completed.

The report is available for public inspection at the Village of Grover Hill Office during regular business hours. Any person wishing to review the report may do so at that time.

By order of the Village of Grover Hill, Village Fiscal Officer Village of Grover Hill, Ohio

**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

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the Annual Financial Report for the Village of Latty, Ohio, for Fiscal Year 2025, has been completed.

The report is available for public inspection at the Village of Latty Office during regular business hours. Any person wishing to review the report may do so at that time.

By order of the Village of Latty, Village Fiscal Officer Village of Latty, Ohio

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**BEARDSLEY DONATION SUPPORTS REPLACEMENT OF PAULDING HIGH SCHOOL GYM BLEACHERS**



**Pictured L - R: Jake Theil, Treasurer; Cassy Beardsley; Chris Etzler, Superintendent**

Cassy Beardsley, PEVS Athletic Trainer, presented a monetary donation towards the replacement cost of the bleachers in the Paulding High School gymnasium. The bleachers in the gym are 40

years old; and even with regular maintenance and inspections, some sections are becoming unsafe and beyond repair. We are very grateful to Ms. Beardsley for her donation!

**ACPL'S ROLLAND CENTER UNVEILS NEW EXHIBIT "THE LINCOLNS AT HOME"**

The Allen County Public Library (ACPL) is pleased to announce the opening of "The Lincolns at Home," a new, free exhibit in the Rolland Center for Lincoln Research at the Main Library running through the end of the year. This original exhibition offers visitors an intimate and compelling look at President Abraham Lincoln's family life.

Drawing from the Lincoln family's private photo album, which includes more than 600 historic photographs preserved in the Rolland Center's collection, "The Lincolns at Home" invites guests to explore rare visual insights into the lives of Abraham, Mary, and their children. The exhibit traces the family's journey from their early years in

Springfield, Illinois, where community and routine grounded them, to their transformative time in Washington, D.C., as the nation confronted civil war.

"This exhibit brings forward a deeply human perspective of one of America's most studied families," said Rolland Center Senior Librarian Jessie Cortesi. "By showcasing personal photographs and lesser-known stories, we hope visitors gain a richer understanding of how the Lincolns supported one another in moments of joy, uncertainty, and profound national change."

"The Lincolns at Home" will be on view during all regular Main Library hours through the end of 2026. The program is free and open to the public. Questions may be directed to [Lincoln@acpl.info](mailto:Lincoln@acpl.info).

**PARKVIEW HEALTH PARTNERS WITH UNDUE MEDICAL DEBT TO ELIMINATE MORE THAN \$64 MILLION IN DEBT FOR 35,000+ PATIENTS**

Parkview Health has partnered with the national nonprofit Undue Medical Debt to eliminate more than \$64 million in past-due medical debt for over 35,000 patients, the health system announced this week. The initiative will abolish \$64.13 million in medical debt for 35,694 individuals, providing immediate financial relief with no action required from patients.

Eligible patients will begin receiving notification letters in Undue Medical Debt-branded envelopes this week. Once the letter is received, the debt is considered forgiven, and recipients do not need to complete any paperwork or take further steps.

Parkview officials said the partnership reflects the organization's broader efforts to reduce healthcare costs and ease financial burdens on patients. "Eliminating this debt - no strings attached - is another example of our commitment to bringing financial relief to patients," said Parkview Chief Financial Officer Jessica Lee-Hansen. She noted that the health system has also taken steps such as renegotiating hospital rates with major insurers and expanding lower-cost ambulatory care sites.

Undue Medical Debt works with hospitals, health-care providers, and collection agencies nationwide to acquire portfolios of medical debt belonging to individuals

who are least able to pay, after reasonable collection efforts have been made. Once acquired, the nonprofit abolishes the debt rather than attempting further collection. In this case, Parkview chose to donate its debt directly rather than sell it, allowing Undue to maximize the impact of its donor support.

Undue Medical Debt President and CEO Allison Sesso said the partnership will provide both financial and emotional relief. To qualify for Undue's debt relief, an individual's medical debt must equal at least five percent of their annual household income, and/or their household income must be at or below 400 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. The forgiven debt includes patients from across the country, though most recipients reside in Indiana and Ohio.

The majority of patients receiving relief had commercial insurance, followed by self-pay patients and those covered by Medicare or Medicaid. Approximately 330 of the affected patients are insured through military or veteran health plans.

Parkview stated it will continue offering financial assistance programs, extended payment plans, and access to financial advocates for patients experiencing hardship. Undue Medical Debt emphasized that its relief is source-based and cannot be requested; only qualifying past-due accounts from partner organizations are eligible, and future relief is not guaranteed.

**HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INVITED TO ADDRESS GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY AT THE 2026 OHIO YOUTH INSTITUTE**



**Ohio Youth Institute participants, hosted by The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, gather on Ohio State's Columbus campus, where high school students presented research on global food security challenges as part of the World Food Prize Foundation's youth programs. Photo: CFAES**

The Ohio Youth Institute (OYI), hosted by the The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES), will return on April 13, 2026, offering Ohio high school students an opportunity to engage with some of the world's most pressing challenges. Held in partnership with the World Food Prize Foundation, the institute encourages students to explore solutions related to hunger, poverty, and sustainability while connecting with peers, educators, and professionals committed to global food security.

OYI is designed to be both an academic and leadership-building experience. Participating students research real-world food security challenges in a selected country and develop evidence-based solutions, which they present during the event. Students who complete the program earn recognition as Borlaug Scholars and become eligible for additional opportunities offered through the World Food Prize

Foundation, including international travel experiences, internships, and fellowships.

The program aligns with the youth development mission of Ohio State University

Extension and Ohio 4-H, focusing on leadership, problem-solving, and global awareness. Extension serves as CFAES' outreach arm, helping connect research-based education with communities across Ohio.

To participate, students must submit a three- to five-page paper analyzing a global challenge and proposing a practical solution. Students are encouraged to work with an adult mentor—such as a teacher, coach, or community leader—who can assist with research and writing. Completed papers and registration materials must be submitted by April 1, 2026.

Organizers say the institute helps students see how their ideas and interests can translate into real-world impact. "Students are not just learning about global issues, they are

discovering that they can influence real change," said Margo Overholt-Seckel, Ohio 4-H Workforce Development and Pathways program manager and OYI coordinator.

Student presentations take place on Ohio State's campus and conclude with recognition as Borlaug Scholars, honoring the legacy of Norman Borlaug, whose work advanced global agricultural productivity and food security.

According to CFAES Dean Cathann A. Kress, OYI provides students with early exposure to academic and career pathways while reinforcing the importance of civic engagement. Organizers emphasize that the institute is not just an academic exercise, but part of a broader effort to build the next generation of leaders focused on food security and sustainable development.

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