



PAULDING COUNTY CELEBRATES CAREER DAY SUCCESS



Pictured above is Beauden Strahley checking out the new Logistize Semi truck that was at the PCED Career Day on April 9, 2026.

PAULDING - Paulding County is celebrating another outstanding Career Day event. The annual event brought together 56 vendors and 334 students participating from throughout the county and some students from Continental school in Putnam County. The event continues

to grow as a cornerstone experience for local students exploring future career pathways.

This year's theme encouraged students to "dress to impress" and arrive ready to engage with employers, educators, and hands-on

PAULDING COUNTY LAND BANK RECEIVES MULTIPLE POSITIVE PROJECT UPDATES

PAULDING - The Paulding County Land Reutilization Corporation (Land Bank) committee received several encouraging updates this month as brownfield, residential blight, and housing reha-

bilitation projects continue progressing throughout the county.

Environmental consultant Matt Wagner of Tetra Tech opened the meeting by announcing that the Ohio EPA has issued the "No Further Action" (NFA) letter for the former JJ Ross Gas Station property in Grover Hill. The NFA letter designates an environmentally clean site and clears the final hurdle for the Land Bank to complete the sale of the property. A purchase agreement is already in place, and a closing will be scheduled soon.

Wagner also reported that the Ohio EPA has approved all documentation related to filling the west Stokely pond on property owned by the Village



AUGLAIZE CHAPEL CHURCH OF GOD TO HOST SPRING REVIVAL SERVICES

OAKWOOD — Auglaize Chapel Church of God will host a series of Spring Revival Services later this month, inviting the community to attend several days of worship, teaching, and fellowship.

The revival will begin on Sunday, April 26, with services scheduled for 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Evening services will continue Monday, April 27 through Wednesday, April 29, each beginning at 7 p.m.

Guest speaker for the revival will be Pastor Jeff Eckman, who brings years of ministry experience across Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. Eckman has served as lead pastor at North Avenue Church of God in Battle Creek, Michigan since 2013. In addition to his pastoral role, he currently serves on the Michigan Credentials Team and on the board for Warner Memorial Camp.

Church leaders encourage individuals and families from the surrounding area to attend the services for a time of spiritual renewal during the spring season.

Auglaize Chapel Church of God is located at 22652 Road 60, Oakwood. For more information, call 419-594-2441.

"Pastor Jeff Eckman grew up in Howell, MI, and attended the Wright's Corners Church of God (Now the Crossroads Church of God) and graduated from Fowlerville Baptist School, in Fowlerville, MI. He met his

ANTWERP VFW POST 5087 GIVES BACK TO COMMUNITY IN MARCH



Receiving \$5000 from Quartermaster Veronica Jasso is David Bash, Paulding County Dog Warden

The members of Antwerp VFW Post 5087 continued their strong tradition of community support throughout the month of March, distributing charitable funds to local organizations and causes that make a difference close to home.

Through charitable gaming, including bingo and other approved activities, fundraising efforts regulated by the Ohio Attorney General's Of-

fice, Post 5087 is able to generate funds that are then directed back into the community. These programs ensure that proceeds are used responsibly and for meaningful charitable purposes.

In March alone, Antwerp VFW Post 5087 contributed to a variety of local initiatives, supporting fellow veterans, community programs, and organizations serving area resi-

(Continued on Page 4)

wife to be, Tori Dendel, in the Michigan Singers and they were married shortly before attending Warner Southern College in Lake Wales, Florida. They both graduated from Warner in 1993. Pastor Jeff's degree is a Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Studies with a minor in Biblical Studies, while Tori received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education. The Eckmans

have 5 children ranging in Age from 8-21. Pastor Jeff served churches in Elwood, Indiana and Defiance, Ohio before returning home to Michigan where he pastored the Floyd Church of God in Midland for over 12 years. In May of 2013 he accepted the call to be the Lead Pastor at the North Avenue Church of God in Battle

(Continued on Page 3)

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

Community Calendar

TUE & WED

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

April 22

- Spring Lunch @ First Christian Church, Paulding, 11:30a-1p

April 23

- Beeswax Class @ Antwerp Library, 4p

April 24

- Plant & Sip Fundraiser @ April's Greenhouse, Bryan, 6:30p

April 25

- Ohio Goes to the Movies: The Prize Winner of Defiance @ Huber, 7p
- Spring Tea @ PC History Museum
- Bread Class @ Antwerp Library, 11a
- Keychain Wristlets Craft @ Oakwood Library, 11a
- Woodburn Lions Club Opening Day Donuts @ Harlan Park, 7-11a

April 26

- Spring Revival Services @ Auglaize Chapel Church of God, 10a & 6p

April 27

- Spring Revival Services @ Auglaize Chapel Church of God, 7p

April 29

- WBESC Board Meeting @ Paulding ESC Conf Rm, 5:30p
- Spring Revival Services @ Auglaize Chapel Church of God, 7p

EMMY 102.7 PAULDING COUNTY'S OWN

Add your event to the calendar info@westbendnews.net

OBITUARIES



PAYNE, OH:
Forest "Glen" Deatruck, Jr., 83, of Payne, passed away Sunday, April 12, 2026 at Cedarhurst Senior Living, Fort Wayne.

Glen was born on November 5, 1942 in Paulding, a son of the late Eunice (Workman) & Forest Glen Deatruck, Sr.

Glen dedicated many years of his career as an accountant at Crumback Symons Chevrolet, New Haven, IN. On August 12, 1962, he married the love of his life, Julia (Johnson), and together they built a life filled with happiness and devotion. Outside of work, Glen found joy in farming, tending his garden, and hunting. He proudly served his community as a member of the Payne Fire and EMS, and was actively involved in organizations such as the Paulding County American Heart Association and as an Honorary Wayne Trace FFA member. A faithful member of St. John's Lutheran Church in Briceton and the Paulding County Gideons, Glen's life was rooted in service, faith, and family. Above all, he deeply loved his family and cherished every moment spent with them.

He will be sadly missed by his daughters, Andrea Ehresman & Sarah (Brian) Franz; brother, Ron (Marita) Deatruck; sisters-in-law, Janet (Floney) Posey & Peg Johnson; grandchildren, Kyle (Shana) Ehresman & Kayla Ehresman, & Maddox Franz; & great grandchildren, Olivia & Carter Ehresman.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Julia; sister, Connie Deatruck, & brother-in-law, John Johnson.

Viewing is Thursday, April 16th from 4-7 PM at Dooley Funeral Home, Payne, Ohio.

Service is Friday, April 17th at 10:30 AM with viewing one hour prior at the funeral home.

He will be laid to rest in Sherman Cemetery.

Memorials are to Heart to Heart Hospice Foundation or the Payne Fire Association.

Fond memories may be shared at dooleyfuneralhome.com.



AUBURN, IN:

Jerry Robinson, age 91 of Auburn, passed away peacefully on Friday, April 10, 2026. He was born on June 29, 1934 in Fort Wayne, Indiana to John and Lucinda Robinson.

Jerry proudly served his country in the United States Army as a Specialist 4th Class, spending two years in Korea. Following his military service, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Tool and Manufacturing Engineering in 1963, a field that reflected his lifelong passion for designing and building.

Jerry enjoyed a long and fulfilling career as an engineer and designer. He worked for General Products for over 20 years, including time in Michigan, and played a key role in designing the company's facility in Angola, Indiana. His professional work also included design projects for Chevrolet, Ford, and Rea Magnet Wire in Fort Wayne. A talented builder, Jerry designed and constructed several homes during his lifetime, including his current residence, many of which he built with his own hands.

A man of many interests, Jerry was also a farmer at heart. He farmed land in the Columbia City area during the 1970s and 1980s, built his own barn, and later began building a new home on his farm in DeKalb County. After suffering a stroke during construction, Jerry turned finishing the home into his rehabilitation—completing it himself and enjoying many more years there, surrounded by the land he loved. From his porch, he took great joy in watching crops grow and wildlife roam.

Jerry was a member of Waterloo United Methodist Church, now Waterloo First Grace Church, and was actively involved in the Waterloo Lions Club, as well as the Bippowis Club. He enjoyed bowling in a league at General Products and was an avid fan of Purdue and IU basketball fan.

Jerry had a lifelong love of automobiles. He restored and customized several vehicles, including a 1934 Chevy Coupe and a 1946 Ford pickup he built for his daughter to drive in high school. He famously drove a 1960 Corvette on his wedding day and later owned an El Camino that carried the family on memorable trips, including one to Florida. He was among the first in the Fort Wayne area to customize cars.

In 1960, Jerry met the love of his life, Deanna Allison, through a mutual friend while she was attending college in Fort Wayne. They were married on April 20, 1963, and shared 63 wonderful years of marriage. Together they built a life filled with work, creativity, family, and faith.

Jerry is survived by his beloved wife, Deanna Robinson; his daughter, Allison Schlough (Fiancé Justin Smith)

of Monroe, Wisconsin; his niece, Barbara (Tom) Condon of Cutter Bay, Florida; his niece Carolyn (John) Vogel of Clearwater Florida; his niece, Kathy (Mark) Nuttle of Wasilla, Alaska; his niece, Vickie Mickelini of Hometown, Indiana; his nephew, Richard Ray (Cheryl) of Orland Indiana and many extended family members and friends.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Lucinda Robinson; his sister, Margaret Sauers (Robert); his brother, Leroy (Edna) Robinson; his son-in-law, Jimmy Schlough; his nephew James Robinson; his nephew Thomas Robinson and grand-nephew, Edward Robinson.

Jerry lived a long, full life—building, designing, farming, learning, and loving deeply. His legacy lives on in the homes he built, the machines he designed, the land he cared for, and the family he cherished.

Visitation will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2026 from 3:00 to 7:00 PM at the Feller and Clark Funeral Home 875 South Wayne Street in Waterloo.

Funeral services will be held on Friday, April 17, 2026 at 11:00 AM at the funeral home in Waterloo.

Burial will take place at the Lehman Cemetery in Payne, Ohio.

Memorial contributions may be made to Waterloo First Grace Church, 300 West Maple Street, Waterloo, Indiana 46793 or to the DeKalb Humane Society, PO Box 806, Auburn, Indiana 46706.

Condolences may be sent to the family at fellerandclark.com and on our Facebook page at Feller and Clark Funeral Home.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Feller and Clark Funeral Home in Waterloo.



FORT WAYNE, IN

Dorothy Jean Helms, 83, of Fort Wayne, passed away peacefully Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at Parkview Regional Medical Center.

Dorothy was born in Celina, Ohio on October 14, 1942, a daughter of the late Ellen (Piper) & Gerold Wolfe.

Dorothy served with dedication as the associate director of the Fort Wayne Medical Society until her retirement in 2009. She found great joy in her yearly trips to Florida, a tradition she cherished for over 14 years. A faithful member of Taylor Chapel in Fort Wayne, Dorothy's life was rooted in her faith and community. Above all, she deeply loved her children and grandchildren, treasuring every moment spent with them. She will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

She will be sadly missed by her husband, Richard Helms, to whom she married April 27, 1973; her children, Chris (Tammy) Brigner & Jodi (Dale) Stoller; daughter-in-law, Deb Brigner; step-children, Rebecca (Rodger) Fitzpatrick, Susan (Paul) Andorfer, & Judy (Scott) Walter; brother, Harold (Sue) Wolfe; brother-in-law, Robert Kraner; 24 grandchildren; 28 great grandchildren; & 5 great great grandchildren.

She was also preceded in death by her son, Michael Brigner, & sister Janice Kraner.

Services will be held privately.

She will be laid to rest in Lehman Cemetery.

Memorials are to Shriner's Hospital for Children or Taylor Chapel.

Fond memories may be shared at dooleyfuneralhome.com.

(Continued from Page 1)

demonstrations. The result was a high-energy day filled with meaningful conversations, interactive learning, and real-world exposure to the opportunities available right here in northwest Ohio.

"Career Day is all about helping students discover what's possible," said Jessica Stechschulte, Administrative Assistant for Paulding County Economic Development. "Having the chance to speak with employers and try hands-on activities opens their eyes to new opportunities and makes their future feel real."

Students had the chance to explore a wide range of industries—from manufacturing and skilled trades to health-care, business, education, and public service. Many vendors brought interactive activities that quickly became highlights. A few examples were Northwest State Community College showcasing their welding simulator, giving students a safe, hands-on introduction to welding techniques. Baughman Tile brought a mini remote-controlled forklift, allowing students to test their coordination and learn about equipment used in modern manufacturing. Logisticize brought a new semi cab for students to sit in and experience what it is like to sit behind the wheel of a big rig, and both the county engineer and sheriff brought vehicles to sit in and enjoys as well.

These experiences helped students not only learn about potential careers but also discover new interests and talents.

Career Day continues to serve as a vital bridge between local employers and the next generation of talent. By offering direct access to resources, professionals, and hands-on learning, the event supports the Paulding County Business Advisory Council and Economic Development (PCED) office mission to strengthen the region's workforce and inspire students to pursue and fulfill local, future-ready careers.

PCED extends its sincere appreciation to all participating schools, businesses, educators, and volunteers who made this year's event a success.

ANTWERP SLUGS PAST KALIDA IN HIGH-SCORING SHOWDOWN

KALIDA — Antwerp's offense came alive in a big way on April 13, powering past Kalida 14-9 in a high-scoring softball contest.

Both teams traded runs early, with the game tied 2-2 after the first inning. Antwerp took control with a three-run second inning and later broke things open with a four-run fourth. Kalida continued to battle back, but Antwerp consistently answered, adding runs in the fifth, sixth, and seventh innings to secure the win.

Antwerp finished with 14 runs on 16 hits, while Kalida tallied nine runs on 14 hits. Both teams committed five errors in a game that saw plenty of action on both

Scripture of the Week

"Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand."

— 1 Corinthians 1:3-4

LIVING A RESURRECTED LIFE THROUGH CHRIST



Living a resurrected life is at the core of the Christian faith, in which believers embrace newness and transformation through Jesus Christ.

This transformation is rooted in the resurrection of Christ, which assures us of our own new life and identity in Him.

Corinthians 5:17 states, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come." This verse speaks to the profound change that occurs when we accept Christ. Our past no longer defines us; we are made new through Him.

Romans 6:4, it says, "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

This emphasizes that just as Christ was resurrected, we are called to live a life free from the bondage of sin and to embrace a new existence filled with hope and purpose.

Living by the Spirit; Galatians 2:20 reads, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in

sides.

Alia Clem led the way for Antwerp with a standout performance at the plate, blasting two home runs and a double while scoring three times and driving in four runs. Allison Sproles also had a big game, recording two singles, a double, and a home run while scoring three runs and collecting three RBI.

Raelynne Zuber added a double and scored three runs, while Haydyn Lengacher contributed two singles, a run, and an RBI. Maddilan Doster chipped in with a single, a run, and two RBI, and Hailey Clem added a double, a run, and an RBI. Gabi Snyder had two singles and a run scored, Kara Pierce added two singles, and Madison Schmidt drove in a run.

Kalida was led by Sophie Vorst, who had a huge day at the plate with a double and

me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." This verse highlights the importance of surrendering our lives to Christ and allowing Him to guide us in our daily walk.

Hope of Resurrection: 1 Peter 1:3 proclaims, "Praise be to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy, he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This illustrates that our resurrection life is filled with hope, stemming from the assurance of Christ's victory over death.

Walking in Love; Ephesians 5:2 encourages us to "walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us." As we live resurrected in Christ, we are called to reflect His love in our actions and to represent Him to the world.

Eternal Perspective: Colossians 3:1-2 states, "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."

Living a resurrected life means constantly focusing on eternity and living in a way that honors God above earthly concerns.

In conclusion, living a resurrected life through Christ involves embracing our new identity, experiencing freedom from sin, walking by faith, and loving others. As we set our minds on heavenly things, we can fully realize the abundant life that Jesus promises us through His resurrection. Glory to God!

Peace and Love,

—Pastor Dwayne

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SEVEN PARKVIEW NURSES RECEIVE DAISY AWARDS

Seven Parkview Health nurses were recognized this winter by The DAISY Foundation for extraordinary nursing.



Cayla Adams

care.

Between January 1 and March 31, the following seven nurses received DAISY awards. For their individual award stories and photos, follow the below links to The DAISY Foundation website:

- Cayla Adams, labor and delivery, Parkview Hospital Randallia
- Emily Altom, progressive critical care, Parkview Regional Medical Center
- Kristan Conrad, OR/SAU, Parkview Noble Hospital
- Ryah Eckel, med/surg, Parkview Kosciusko Hospital
- John Gitau, progressive critical care, Parkview Regional Medical Center
- Richard Harmon, ICU, Parkview Bryan Hospital
- Alexis O'Connor, med/surg, Parkview Regional Medical Center



Ryah Eckel

The DAISY Foundation was founded in memory of Patrick Barnes, a 33-year-old man who spent eight weeks in a hospital being treated for an autoimmune disorder. During his stay, Barnes received excellent nursing care, and, in his memory, his family created The DAISY Award® to honor nurses who go above and beyond for their patients.



Emily Altom

Recognized in 40 countries and territories, the Foundation has honored 220,000+ nurses across 6,500+ health-care organizations and schools of nursing — with more than 2.5 million nominations submitted by patients, families and colleagues. The award not only recognizes nurses for exceptional care, but helps to inspire and engage co-workers, build team spirit and reinforce the importance of providing patient and family-centered



Alexis O'Connor

“I was so surprised to receive the DAISY award,” Eckel said. “All of the things that my patient mentioned, such as advocacy, listening and educating are all an important part of the job, so I felt like I was just doing my job, a job I love!”

“It brings me so much joy



Kristen Conrad



Richard Harmon



John Gitau

knowing I can help make these hard times a little better for these patients,” said O'Connor. “Whether it’s providing medications, emotional support in vulnerable moments, connecting with real life experiences on a personal level or anything else they may

(Continued from Page 1)

Creek where he currently serves. He has served the Church of God in Michigan on the Business Committee, as Vice Chair and Chair of the General Assembly, as Vice Chair and Chair of the Board of Directors, and currently serves on the Church Health Ministry. Even though he attended camp meetings as a young person, His love for, and involvement with Camp Meetings started in Ohio at the Payne Camp Meeting where he served as Youth director, member of the Program committee, and Evangelist. His involvement

need, I know I am helping make these moments into a more positive experience for these patients and their families.”

In total, 117 Parkview nurses have been honored with a DAISY award since 2021.

“The stories our patients tell in their nominations of our DAISY nurses are always inspirational,” said Juli Johnson, chief nursing and health-care markets executive, Parkview Health. “Our DAISY nurses serve as great examples of care that is professional and compassionate. Our nurses don’t just take care of patients; they truly care about their patients, too.”

For more information about The DAISY Award, visit daisyfoundation.org.

continues in Michigan having served the Charlevoix camp as Youth director, and Evangelist, the St. Louis Camp as board member, chair of the Program committee, and sound and video coordinator, and Warner camp as a youth camp director, conference leader and Evangelist. Pastor Jeff’s hobbies include playing guitar, coaching (any sport his kids are playing), basketball, softball, golf, photography, computer graphics, video editing, and web design. His priorities are pretty simple. He is first and foremost a follower of Christ, second a husband and father, and third a Pastor and Worship Leader.

LIBRARY CONGRATULATES VISIT FORT WAYNE ON TOURISM AWARD FOR JEWISH GENEALOGY CONFERENCE PARTNERSHIP

The Allen County Public Library (ACPL) proudly congratulates Visit Fort Wayne on receiving the Indiana Tourism Association’s (ITA) Best Meeting/Group Partnership Award for its work bringing the International Jewish Genealogy Society’s Annual Conference to Fort Wayne. The conference held August 10-14, 2025, brought together genealogists, researchers, and families from across the globe for educational sessions, networking, and access to ACPL’s unparalleled collections.

The award recognizes the successful collaboration that helped secure and host the 2025 conference, which welcomed hundreds of attendees from around the world to explore family history and genealogy. The event was held in partnership with the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies and showcased Fort Wayne as a premier destination for family history research and conferences.

A key factor in attracting the conference was the ACPL’s renowned Genealogy Center, one of the largest publicly available genealogy collections in the world. The Center’s global reputation and extensive resources played a central role in positioning Fort Wayne as an ideal host city for the international event.

“Visit Fort Wayne’s experienced leadership and partnership were instrumental in bringing this prestigious conference to our community,” said ACPL Director of Special Collections Curt Witcher. “This recognition reflects not

only their trademark outstanding work, but also the power of collaboration in showcasing Fort Wayne—and the Genealogy Center—as a world-class destination for research, discovery, and connection.”

Visit Fort Wayne was repeatedly praised by conference organizers for their collaboration. According to event organizer, Irv Adler, the Visit Fort Wayne team gave excellent service throughout the planning process: “I can’t say enough good things about VFW and their staff. You couldn’t ask for better support.”

According to Witcher, conference participants were impressed by not only the organization of the event, but by the collaboration between the Genealogy Center, Visit Fort Wayne, and the Grand Wayne Convention Center.

“Partnerships like this demonstrate what’s possible when organizations come together around a shared vision,” continued Witcher. “Visit Fort Wayne, the Grand Wayne Convention Center and our downtown hotels represent the trifecta of an excellent visitor experience. We are so proud to work alongside these partners to highlight the unique assets of our community and to welcome visitors from around the world. They’re seeing that Fort Wayne provides the perfect mix of affordability, tourist amenities, ease of access, and world-class experiences.”

In all, the IAJGS conference produced an estimated \$621,000 in economic impact. The ACPL looks forward to continued collaboration with Visit Fort Wayne to support their award-winning efforts to grow the impact of tourism and meetings in Northeast Indiana—driving economic activity while elevating the re-

The deadline for the West Bend News is THURSDAYS at 5pm for the following issue.

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MILITARY HISTORY IN PAULDING COUNTY



By: Mark Holtsberry

William Streeter Travis was born October 22, 1896, in Paulding County, Ohio, the son of Earl Norman Travis, born June 1861 in Ohio, and Margaret C. (Streeter) Travis, born August 1863 in Ohio. This couple was married in 1880. By 1900, with the family living on Water Street in Paulding, the Travis family had grown with the births of Kate (1882), Paul (July 1889), Florence (April 1891), Helen (March 1893), and William (1896). Earl was working as a real estate agent, and most of the children who were old enough were attending school.

By 1910, still living on Water Street, another daughter, Mary Margaret, was born in 1906; she passed away in 1907. Anne Louise was born February 18, 1908. William, along with Helen and Florence, were still in school, and Earl continued working as a real estate agent.

In 1912, the family moved to 212 East Jefferson Street in Paulding. On June 5, 1917, William returned home from Akron, Ohio, where he had been working for the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company as a Kelly airfield worker, and registered for the World War I draft at the Paulding precinct. He was listed as single, with blue eyes, light blonde hair, a light complexion, standing 5 feet 7 inches tall, and employed as a bookkeeper. William was inducted into service on August 15, 1918, in Paulding. He served in the 96th Balloon Company, Air

Service, until December 16, 1918, then was transferred to the 67th Balloon Company, Air Service, until he was honorably discharged on January 22, 1919.

By 1920, William was living with his family on North Williams Street in Paulding and was working as an agent for the Amoco Fuel Company. On June 28, 1922, he married Francis B. Bashore, born November 2, 1898, in Ohio. She was working as a bookkeeper at the Columbia Sugar Beet Company. On July 14, 1924, Earl Travis passed away and was buried in Live Oak Cemetery. He was followed by his wife Margaret in 1928.

A daughter, Peggy, was born October 23, 1926. By 1930, William, Francis, and Peggy were living at 315 West Perry Street in Paulding. William was working as a clerical clerk for the Board of Public Affairs. In 1933, the family moved to Muncie, Indiana. In 1938, William opened a watch repair shop in Muncie, where the family lived at 1414 West Main Street, and his business was located at 315 South Walnut Street.

By 1940, the family had moved to 637 North Jefferson Street in Muncie. In 1942, William registered for the World War II draft. On August 2, 1948, Francis passed away from a ruptured blood vessel at Muncie Hospital. She was buried in Elm Ridge Memorial Park Cemetery in Muncie, Indiana, Evening Garden Plot 4, Lot 39, Space 4-A.

By 1950, William had moved to 102 Rosewood Street in Muncie and was still working as a watch repairman. In the early 1950s, he opened the Travis Gift Shop at Charles and Walnut Streets in Muncie. On Wednesday, March 23, 1955, at 6:45 a.m., William passed away at Ball Memorial Hospital from a ruptured blood vessel, likely a stroke. Funeral services were held at 1:30 p.m. Friday at Meeks Mortuary, officiated by Rev. David G. Walker. He was buried at Elm Ridge Cemetery beside his wife, Francis. Peggy passed away in 2012.

...Until Next Time!

gion’s national and international profile.

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about the Genealogy Center and its resources, visit GenealogyCenter.org.

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HONOR A VETERAN!

Have their name engraved on a granite panel at the new Paulding Veterans Memorial.
The cost per name is \$200.
Engravings can be dedicated to current military members or those who have honorably completed their service.
The enrollment period for this program will be closed on Saturday, May 16, 2026. There are still spaces available. Don't miss this opportunity to honor a veteran.
The order form may also be obtained by scanning the QR to the right or by calling John Daeger at 419-989-0548.



Receiving \$5000 from VFW Trustee Randy Brooks is Chief Miller, Paulding County Sheriff Department



Receiving \$2500 from VFW Trustee Randy Brooks is Ashley McDougall, Antwerp EMS



Receiving \$2500 from VFW Trustee Randy Brooks is Bobby Addis, Antwerp Fire Chief

(Continued from Page 1)

Antwerp VFW Post 5087 reflect the heart of the organization: veterans continuing to serve, long after their time in uniform, by investing in the people and programs that make their hometown stronger.

idents. Whether assisting those in need, helping youth programs, or backing local events, the post remains committed to strengthening the Antwerp community. The ongoing efforts of

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF AGING RECOGNIZES APRIL AS FRAUD PREVENTION MONTH

(AGE) is recognizing April as Fraud Prevention Month. Every older Ohioan deserves to live and age with dignity and without the fear of fraud, intimidation, or exploitation. Ohio is home to more than

COLUMBUS, Ohio - The Ohio Department of Aging

2.8 million older adults, and they can be vulnerable to financial fraud. As scams become more sophisticated, today's technology makes it easier for criminals to steal personal information, drain accounts, or trick them into unwillingly committing fraud.

Some examples of scams include:

- Phishing emails and unsolicited texts or phone calls asking for banking, credit card or other financial information.
- Fraudsters trying to get older adults to convert retirement assets into so-called "safer, guaranteed investments."
- Imposters or hackers posing as friends or family members, asking older adults to send money immediately, usually by email or social media.

In March 2026, AGE alerted Ohioans to reports of a phone scam involving individuals falsely claiming to represent the Golden Buckeye program. Residents reported receiving unsolicited calls from scammers attempting to obtain personal information, including protected data such as Social Security numbers. These calls are not from the Ohio Department of Aging.

"Fraud targeting older Ohioans isn't just a financial threat, it's an attack on their security and peace of mind," said AGE Director Ursel McElroy. "Protecting older adults from scams is a responsibility we take seriously. When we empower people with the tools to recognize and report fraud, we help ensure that every older Ohioan can age with confidence and safety."

Ohioans can report scam attempts to the Federal Trade Commission at reportfraud.ftc.gov or the Ohio Attorney General's Office at inquiries.ohioattorneygeneral.gov. Anyone who believes they may have been a victim of a scam should contact their local law enforcement agency.

The Ohio Department of Commerce is also a great resource for information and tips about how to avoid fraud.

About AGE - The Ohio Department of Aging serves and advocates for the needs of Ohioans age 60 and older, as well as their families, caregivers, and communities. Programs include home and community-based long-term supports and services, as well as initiatives to promote health and wellness throughout the lifespan. Visit www.aging.ohio.gov.

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.

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 fax: 419-258-1313
 USPS: West Bend News
 PO Box 1008
 Antwerp, OH 45813

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

At Day's End

Is anybody happier because you passed his day?

Does anyone remember that you spoke to him today?

The day is almost over, and it's toiling time is through;

Is there anyone to utter now a kindly word of you?

Can you say tonight in parting with the day that's slipping fast,

They you helped a single brother of the many that you passed?

Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said;

Does the man whose hopes were fading, now with courage look ahead?

Did you waste the day, or lose it? Was it well or sorely spent?

Did you leave a trail of kindness, or a scar of discontent?

As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that God will say,

"You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today?"

By: John Hall

—Dave Laukhuf, Paulding, OH

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Letter in Support of the Paulding Exempted Village Schools 0.75% Permanent Improvement Income Tax Levy

To the Voters of the Paulding Exempted Village School District:

I am 1998 Paulding graduate who has been heavily involved in the school and community for many years. I was an elected school board member for 8 years at Paulding and Continue to serve as our Vantage Career Center Representative.

As a strong supporter of our local schools and the future of our community, I urge you to vote YES on the 0.75% five-year permanent improvement income tax levy for the Paulding Exempted Village Schools (PEVS) on the May 5, 2026 Primary Election ballot. This targeted levy will generate approximately \$2 million annually — or \$10 million over its five-year term

— exclusively for critical building maintenance, equipment upgrades, facility improvements, and necessary replacements of curriculum and technology. Importantly, none of the funds can be used for salaries or benefits.

With ever changing state regulations that keep putting financial constraints on public schools, our government is putting the financial burden on local districts to make up the gaps.

Our school buildings range in age from 20 to 70 years old, and many essential systems are reaching or have exceeded their useful life. Examples include:

- 37-year-old boilers at Paulding High School
- Malfunctioning HVAC systems requiring manual overrides
- Aging chillers operating at less than half capacity
- Degrading copper plumbing with pinhole leaks
- Roofs and air handlers nearing the end of their lifespan
- Outdated bleachers, maintenance vehicles, and transportation vans (some 8-14 years old)

A professional 20-year capital plan shows that annual maintenance and replacement needs total about \$1.6 million, while current permanent improvement funding covers only \$410,000 per year — a shortfall of more than \$1.1 million annually. Without dedicated funding, the district has relied on temporary one-time grants (\$1.6 million from 2019-2025) and even diverted operating funds, which is unsustainable. This levy directly addresses these priorities, including \$3 million for HVAC repairs/replacement, \$1 million for roofs, new buses, gym floor and bleacher upgrades, athletic field improvements, and technology updates.

This investment is reasonable and fair. For a household earning \$40,000 annually, the cost is just \$5.77 per weekly paycheck. Among comparable districts in Defiance, Paulding, Putnam, and Van Wert counties, Paulding ranks mid-pack on income and property taxes but has lower per-pupil local revenue due to its size and rural nature. An income tax — based on ability to pay — is an equitable way to support our schools without overburdening fixed-income or property owners.

Paulding Exempted Village Schools serve approximately 1,341 students across four buildings in a 177-square-mile rural district. Despite funding challenges, our students and staff continue to excel:

- The district has shown improvement on the Ohio State Report Card.
- Students earn college credit and industry credentials through strong academic programs.
- Music and arts programs are growing, with record participation in band, choir, and drama.
- Athletics, quiz bowl, V-Ag, and FFA teams achieve at the state and national levels.
- Graduation rates remain strong (recently reported around 92-94%).

These successes depend on safe, functional facilities that support learning, athletics, transportation, and extracurricular activities. Failing to pass this levy risks forcing cuts to programs or

continued patchwork repairs that divert money from the classroom.

Paulding's children and our community's long-term vitality deserve modern, well-maintained schools. This five-year levy is a smart, limited-term investment that will protect our infrastructure, preserve educational excellence, and strengthen our district for years to come. I encourage every voter to review the facts on the district's website (pauldingschools.org/income-tax-levy) and join me in voting YES on May 5.

Sincerely,
 —Brian Egnor
 Concerned Paulding Resident / Parent / Taxpayer
 Paulding Exempted Village School District

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I am writing in support of the Paulding Exempted Village School tax issue.

Our school board has responded to a number of comments following the last vote. The levy is now limited to five years instead of permanent and they have dropped consideration of a new bus garage.

This week I got to visit the high school and was so pleased to find it clean, bright. It is so nice that our staff keeps the facilities clean.

Of course the problems to resolve are not in plain sight. It is not likely that I can get on the roofs to offer my opinion. Old water pipes don't run down the hallway but are behind walls, just like at home. I trust our staff and school board to identify needs.

I still keep up on the complex formulas for state and local funding for schools. I note that last year the State changed property tax law and the action resulted in a cut of dollars for all Ohio public schools. I believe the loss for our district is \$1,200,000. That's a tough cut and reduces the dollars for everything, including maintenance. It is not possible to set money aside for future needs if the state continues to take it away for another purpose. This tax issue is on income and guarantees our money stays home to maintain our schools.

I'm with the School Board decision to set aside dollars for maintenance and plan to vote yes.

Sincerely,
 —Stan Searing
 Retired Superintendent

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Great Things Happening at PEVS

Hello PEVS Community! What a school year Paulding Exempted Village Schools has had! Highlights include:

- Our State Report Card improved to 3.5 stars, where we have met state standards in academic achievement, and have made strides in Early Literacy and College, Career, Military and Workforce Readiness.
- Students in our after-school welding program received college credit and obtained their Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt and OSHA 10 certifications.
- Our quiz bowl team had their highest finish in our league tournament and also qualified for the national

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ournament.
 • We had over 100 5-7 grade choir members perform in a combined performance on Friday, reflecting the growth of our music department.
 • We had our first undefeated football season in 37 years, record setting boys and girls basketball teams, our cheerleading squad qualified for state, and state qualifiers in cross country and wrestling.
 • We have a nationally-recognized Vo-Ag and FFA program that has its first group of USI trained students who can get their certification to fly drones.

It has been so enjoyable to see what our students have achieved and the leadership our administration and staff members have given to support them along the way.
 This is all being done in facilities that require numerous repairs. The District is currently deficit spending, with costs and expenses exceeding revenue, and that trend is projected to continue in the financial forecast as costs and expenses continue to climb. Our permanent improvement fund, which is used to purchase new equipment and for the maintenance and repair of our buildings, receives \$427,000 of revenue annually. To put that in perspective, that amount of money just covers the cost of purchasing a couple of buses to replace those in our aging fleet and the student Chromebooks that need to be replaced each year. The cost of replacing or repairing aging equipment and facilities exceeds that amount.

Maintenance needs in our school buildings include:

- Replacement of 37-year-old boilers in the JH/HS building – cost estimate \$300,000.
- Replacement of a chiller in the JH/HS building -- cost estimate \$200,000.
- Replacement of controls for our entire HVAC system at the Paulding campus (boilers, chillers, air handlers, and classroom and hallway units) – cost estimate over \$1,000,000.
- Replacement of aging roofs on all of our buildings in the next few years – cost estimate over \$1 million.
- The copper plumbing in our buildings is deteriorating quickly, and even the repairs done 10 years ago are failing.
- Repair or replacement of HS gym bleachers, which no longer open and close properly. Estimated cost of repair \$62,000; estimated cost of replacement \$700,000. (We have been fortunate to receive four donations totaling \$125,000 going towards the project to install new bleachers. Thank you to those who have donated!)

As you may know, the Board has approved the placement of a five-year permanent improvement levy on the ballot on May 5. This is a change from the continuing levy that was on the ballot in November, which didn't pass. The purpose of the levy is to raise funds for the District to spend on its buildings and equipment, for the benefit of all of our students and staff. This is not the same as an operating levy that raises funds to use for salaries, benefits, purchased services or supplies.

The Board has determined that permanent improvement funds will not be

used to build a new bus garage in the next five years. You can visit the information page on the District website for more detail about the District's maintenance needs, projected costs, and the intended use of permanent improvement funds.

We have enjoyed such a great school year so far, and I believe there are many more of these in our future! Go Panthers!!!

#pantherstateofmind
 —Chris Etzler

ANTWERP JH/HS THIRD NINE WEEKS HONOR ROLL 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

**Denotes 4.0*
Gold Card 4.0-3.67 (with no grade less than a B-)

SENIORS: Gwendolyn Carter, *Marcelo Cruz, *Leigha Doster, Sara Farr, *Dylan Hahn, *Ella Hughes, *Miley Jewell, Estee Lichty, Zaine McMichael, *Harlee Moore, *Mara Phlipot, *Hampton Rogge, Lauren Walters, Raelynne Zuber,

JUNIORS: Briley Bagley, Lucy Conley, Maclaren Ehrhart, Josie Hahn, Aiden Hook, Eliana Hormann, Alyssa Lawson, Tyler Overman, Gabriella Snyder, Allison Sproles, *Keira Spyker

SOPHOMORES: Bryce-ton Barker, Avery Honigford, Kaira Jones, Braxton Peters, Allison Rice, Triston Schilt

FRESHMEN: *Simon Conley, Pearce Cottrell, Allison Miller, Annabelle Mowery, Evan Overman, Alaina Reinhart, Garrett Robbins

EIGHTH GRADE: Layla Bermejo, Parker Bermejo, *Eliza Cline, Conner Fidler, *Hayden Grant, Anderson Honigford, Carson Hughes, Kyler Johnson, Luke Jones, Alivia Kiracofe, Parker Lucas, Isaac Meyer, *Mackenzie Myers, Jordan Steel, *Briggs Zartman

SEVENTH GRADE: Carter Bagley, Carter Beregszazi, Conley Bissell, Quinne Bradbury, *Aubree Feehan, Braxton Fidler, Destiny Getz, Dalton Hines, *Charlotte Kauser, *Jocelyn Laker, *Josephine Laker, Jameson Malfait, Mackenzie Muir, Julian Rivera, Adelynnne Slattman, Serenity Smith, *Brady Stairhime, *Sylvie Zartman, Lily Zijlstra, *Cy Zuber

SIXTH GRADE: *Adelle Cline, Missouri Cottrell, Annabelle James, Olivia Kosch, Lilian Mowery, Lauren Overman, *Lucas Phillips, Quintin Reyes, Cora Rohrs, Greyson Smith, Emmett Wurster

Blue Card 3.66-3.33 (with no grade less than a C+)

SENIOR: Kalli Billman, Krystal Bradburn, Jack Carter, Ardisen Lehman, Hayden Lengacher, Camryn McAlexander, Lillyanna McKay, Taylor Stiebling

JUNIORS: Keegan Gray-Wyckoff, Blake Gribler, Emily Laker, Jennifer Lawhorn, Weston Rhonhouse, Michael Rorhs, Mia Salazar, Nathan Sanders, Lucas Sproles

SOPHOMORES: Carter Baumert, Tucker Doster, Taylor Lockhart, Kati Phares, Franco Rivera, Clara Rohrs, Anabelle Saylor, Jazmine Yanez, Anneliese Zijlstra

FRESHMEN: Gianna Laker, Aleta Sorrell

EIGHTH GRADE: Isaac Friend, Jameson Graham, Benton Rogge, Bentley Taylor

SEVENTH GRADE: Keigan Custer, Adrian Hogans, Maria Isabel Isodoro, Juliet Jones, Adysson McKay, Bradyn Miller, Samuel Montgomery, Luke Saylor, Kennedy Zuber

SIXTH GRADE: Brock Barker, Shyahna Barkley, Preston Bradley, Elliot Henschen, Brody Smith, Ulrik Zijlstra, June Zuber

Honor Roll 3.32-3.0 (with no grade less than a C)

SENIORS: Corbin Eaton, Raeley Franklin, Amelia Graham, Kane Hines, Taylor Shull

JUNIORS: Jonathon Coker

SOPHOMORES: Hudsyn Bagley, Gage Barker, Alia Cleds, Reese Franklin, Brayden Fuller, Cadem Ingol, Noah Lucas, Jason McKay, lise Meyer, Kinzey Parrish, Alyssa Phillips, Case Trabel, Kora Zuber

FRESHMEN: Brennan Barker, Devin Hicks, Caleb Keeler, Brooklynn Lawson, Emerson Morrow, Cate Rohrs, Bailey Traxler

EIGHTH GRADE: Hannah Bradbury, Bradyn Coleman, Cooper Nestleroad, Marshall Rice, Gabriel Wenzlick, Christopher Yanez

SEVENTH GRADE: Nora Conley, Kendall Heine, Colt Lockhart, Easton Ryan, Stella Schmidt, Lane Sensabaugh

SIXTH GRADE: Grace Beck-Bragg, Olivia Bennett, Soren Conley, Kendall Florence, Sophia Friend, Aubree Frost, Mckenzie George, Bennett Graham, Waylon Hounshell, Ellie Kemerer, Layton Ladd, Harper Morrow, Zooey Mylek, Jameson Reeb, Rylee Slattman, Ava Starr, Raven Swary, Madison Wiesehan

SUSTAINABLE INVESTING MEANS INVESTING WITH PURPOSE

When you think about investing, you probably want your money to grow. But maybe you also want it to make a positive difference in the world while you continue pursuing your financial goals. That's the foundation of sustainable investing — an approach that considers environmental, social and governance (ESG) factors alongside traditional financial analysis.

Sustainable investing allows you to support better business practices through your investment choices. It looks at how companies address issues ranging from climate change to worker well-being to corporate ethics. At its core, it's about aligning investments with personal values while still focusing on long-term financial outcomes.

Here are the three main areas of sustainable investing:

- Environmental considerations include how companies respond to climate change, use natural resources and manage pollution.
- Social factors address workforce well-being, product safety and efforts to reduce social inequities.
- Governance focuses on corporate behavior, ethics policies and financial transparency.

You may wonder whether investing sustainably means sacrificing returns. Research suggests it doesn't. New York University's Stern Center for Sustainable Business reviewed more than 1,000 studies from 2015-20 and found that incorporating ESG factors does not inherently diminish returns, and in many cases is associated with improved financial performance. As with any investment approach, it's important to focus on high quality investments that help support more consistent long term returns.

Sustainable investing can take several forms:

- ESG intentional strategies spread out your investments and have clear goals for choosing companies that follow strong environmental, social and governance practices.

• Sustainable thematic strategies focus on specific issues, such as clean energy or water conservation.

• Impact investments go a step further, targeting measurable environmental or social outcomes. Because they prioritize more narrow, specific objectives, they may carry higher volatility and potentially lower returns.

One concern you may hear about is "greenwashing," which happens when companies or funds exaggerate their environmental efforts. To help prevent this, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission created a rule in 2023 that requires any fund with "ESG" in its name to keep at least 80% of its assets in ESG aligned investments.

Another challenge is data consistency. Today, 99% of S&P 500 companies report ESG metrics, according to the Center for Audit Quality, but different rating providers still use different methods. Looking at relative rankings can help you compare companies and mutual funds in a more consistent way.

Deciding whether to include sustainable investments in your portfolio really depends on your values and financial goals. You can build a well diversified portfolio with or without them. A qualified financial advisor can help you understand whether adding sustainable investments fits your overall strategy and makes sense for your situation.

As more companies disclose ESG data and more funds offer sustainable options, investors have increasing opportunities to align their portfolios with their values — without sacrificing their financial objectives.

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

READER PICK-UP LOCATIONS

OHIO LOCATIONS

Antwerp: Antwerp Library, Antwerp Exchange Bank, Antwerp Exchange, Dollar General, Family Dollar, G-Mart, Genesis House, H2O Water Store, Pop-N-Brew, Pit-Stop, Small Town Bliss,
Bryan: 4 Seasons, Bryan Hospital, Chief, CVS, Dollar General, Town & Country, Walmart
Cecil: 127 Maramart, Paulding Pancake House
Continental: ACE Hardware, Dollar General, Okuley's Pharmacy
Defiance: Newman's Marathon Carryout, Smoke Stop, Chief, Dollar General (Clinton St), Senior Center, Advanced Auto, Marathon Main Stop, Rite Aid, Defiance Public Library ... Junction Dollar General, Cabbage Patch
Edgerton: USPS, H&W Napa, Kaiser Supermarket, Utilities Dept, Marathon Main Stop, Marathon (East)
Grover Hill: N&N Quick Stop, GH Branch Library, Dollar General
Hicksville: Sailers, Vancrest, Shell Station, Citgo, Marathon, Dollar General, Senior Center, Village offices, Johnson Memorial Library, Red Angel Pizza, McDonalds
Ney: Marathon
Oakwood: Oakwood Market, The Oakleaf, Dollar General, Cooper Library, Landing Strip
Paulding: Ace Hardware, Bargain Bin, Board of Elections, Chief, Corner Market, Courthouse, Dairy Queen, Dollar General, Gardens of Paulding, Gorrell Bros, Holly, Wood & Vine, Integrity Ford, Kwik Mart, Maramart, Napa Do It Best, PC Sheriff's Office, PCH, PC

Carnegie Library, Stykemain, VFW Post 587
Payne: Antwerp Exchange Bank, Dollar General, Lichty's Barber Shop, Maramart, Panchos, Payne Library, Puckerbrush Pizza, Village offices, Vancrest of Payne
Sherwood: Post Office, Sherwood Bank, Sherwood Library, Village Food Emporium
Scott: Scott Post Office
Van Wert: CVS, Ace Hardware, Chief, Walmart, Orchard Tree

INDIANA LOCATIONS

Fort Wayne: Golden Years Nursing Home, Golden Years Assisted Living, Hahn Systems, Walmart
Grabill: Grabill Hardware, Farm Building Supply, Save-A-Lot/Grabill Country Sales
Harlan: Marathon, Harlan Donuts, Dollar Exchange, Harlan Cafe, Antwerp General Bank
Hoagland: Hoagland Pizza Pub, Mel's Town Market
Milan Center: Milan Center Feed & Grain
Monroeville: All American Marathon, Adams Heritage Assisted Living, Dollar General, Phillips 66
New Haven: ACPL Library, Clips, Chamber of Commerce, CVS, H&K Chevrolet, Ken's Meat Market, McDonalds, NH Bakery, Paterson Hardware, Richard's
Woodburn: ACPL Library, Chop Shop, Clip-N-Tan, Country Oasis, Dollar General, Financial Partners, Heckley Automotive, Post Office, Phoenix Manor, S&V Liquors, Woodburn Hardware, Woodburn Xpress

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EAST ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS SCHOOL BOARD HONORED BY THE INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION



The East Allen County Schools School Board has been recognized by the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) with an Exemplary Governance Award (EGA) for calendar year 2025 for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to student success and professional learning.

The East Allen County Schools School Board is one of only 120 school boards in the State of Indiana to earn an award through the EGA program this year.

The EGAs are conferred annually across four levels of distinction based on the points earned by school board members for attending ISBA seminars, workshops, conferences, and other learning events, as well as the completion of certain additional cri-

teria, such as a retreat with an outside facilitator and goal setting to elevate student achievement outcomes.

“On behalf of ISBA, I would like to commend this dedicated group of school boards and school board members,” said ISBA Executive Director Terry Spradlin. “School boards perform a vital public service for their communities, and board members who actively participate in professional learning are better equipped to govern effectively and meet the needs of students.”

Award recipients were formally recognized at ISBA’s Spring Regional Meetings during the month of April.

“We are proud to celebrate these school boards for their exceptional leadership in the pursuit of excellence in educa-

tion,” said ISBA President Steve Corona.

In addition to the board-level accolades, 314 school board members earned individual EGA awards.

ISBA provides a full range of professional learning opportunities at dozens of events throughout the year to inform and educate school board members about governance best practices, legislative issues, policy development, school law, and more. More than 115 hours of professional development were available from ISBA for members in 2025.

For a complete list of individual and board award recipients for the 2025 award year, please visit <https://www.isba-ind.org/about/award-programs/ega>

EAST ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS HONORED BY THE INDIANA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

Ms. Pamela Dukes, Mrs. Beth Wood, Ms. Jennifer Blackburn and Mr. Steve Screenshot, school board members for East Allen County Schools, have been recognized by the Indiana School Boards Association (ISBA) with an Exemplary Governance Award (EGA) for calendar year 2025 for demonstrating an outstanding commitment to student success and professional learning.

- Pamela Dukes - Level 1 Commendable



Pamela Dukes

- Beth Wood - Level 2 Advanced
- Jennifer Blackburn - Level 3 Distinguished
- Steve Screenshot - Level 4 Exemplary

These board members are four of only 314 school board members in the State of Indiana to earn an award through the EGA program this year.

The awards are conferred annually by ISBA across four



Jennifer Blackburn



Beth Wood

levels of distinction, based on points earned for attending ISBA seminars, workshops, conferences, and other learning events. This year’s group of honorees includes 124 Commendable Awards (Level 1), 71 Advanced Awards (Level 2), 60 Distinguished Awards (Level 3), and 59 Exemplary Awards (Level 4).

“On behalf of ISBA, I would like to commend this dedicated group of school board members,” said ISBA Executive Director Terry Spradlin. “School boards perform a vital public service, and members who actively participate in professional learning are better equipped to govern effectively and meet the needs of students.”



Steve Screenshot

Award recipients were formally recognized at ISBA’s Spring Regional Meetings during the month of April.

In addition to the individual accolades, 120 school boards earned board-level awards, which are based on the points earned by each school board member, as well as the completion of certain additional criteria, such as a retreat with an outside facilitator and goal setting to elevate student achievement outcomes.

“We are proud to celebrate these school board members for their exceptional leadership in the pursuit of excellence in education,” said ISBA President Steve Corona.

ISBA provides its members with a full range of professional learning opportunities. At dozens of events throughout the year, ISBA informs and educates board members about governance best practices, legislative advocacy, policy, school law, and more. More than 115 hours of professional development were available from ISBA for members in 2025.

For the full list of individual and board award recipients for the 2025 award year, please visit <https://www.isba-ind.org/about/award-programs/ega>.

HERITAGE EDGES WAYNE TRACE IN FIVE-INNING PITCHERS’ DUEL

WAYNE TRACE — A tight defensive battle turned in Heritage’s favor late, as the Patriots scored twice in the fifth inning to defeat Wayne Trace 2-0 in a five-inning contest on April 13.

Both teams were locked in a scoreless game through

DEFIANCE AREA FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW FUND SUPPORTING LOCAL PARKS



The Defiance Area Foundation has announced the creation of a new charitable fund, the A Walk in the Parks Fund, established by Jay and Chris Hanson to support parks throughout Defiance County.

The fund is designed to provide resources for any existing or future park in Defiance County, as well as public or private parks that are open and free to the public and meet Foundation guidelines. The fund will support maintenance projects, enhancements to park facilities, and the creation of new outdoor spaces that benefit the community.

Jay and Chris Hanson shared the inspiration behind the fund:

“Our family believes in supporting the Defiance community, where we have made a life together, raised our children, and created precious memories along the way. A Walk in the Parks is a fund that we have established to

provide a path to give back for all who have enjoyed spending time at any of the Defiance area parks. This is an avenue to literally put the Defiance Area Foundation’s motto, Nelson Hendersen’s famous quote into practice, to do something generous to benefit future generations. A strong parks system is just one of the many aspects of a strong community. We encourage anyone in Defiance County who cares about our outdoor parks to name A Walk in the Parks Fund in their estate plan.”

The Defiance Area Foundation expressed its gratitude for the Hanson family’s commitment to strengthening the community and preserving the outdoor spaces that enrich local quality of life. To give to the new A Walk in the Parks Fund at the Foundation, please visit <https://defianceareafoundation.org/donate-to-a-fund>

BASEBALL RAINED OUT AT WOODLAN



Woodlan has won their last several games but Monday night’s game ended short when severe weather rolled in with the Warriors up 5-0 over the Railroaders. Shown here is senior Jordan Halsey getting the out at first with Max Gillenwater picking up the ball in right field. More pictures at engaging-exposures.com

four innings, with strong pitching and limited offensive opportunities on each side. Heritage broke through in the top of the fifth, capitalizing on a pair of hits and Wayne Trace miscues to plate the game’s only runs.

Heritage finished with two runs on five hits and committed no errors, while Wayne Trace was held to three hits and had three errors in the field.

Sydney Martin led the Heritage offense with two

doubles and a run scored. Elaine Bickel added a single and an RBI, while Audra Bickel contributed a run and an RBI. Teaghan O’Shaughnessy chipped in with a double, and Isabella Myers added a single.

Wayne Trace managed just three hits in the contest, with Olivia Zartman recording a double, and Avery Noffsinger and Sam Williams each adding a single.

(Continued on Page 7)

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STERRETT, RAIDERS BLANK ANTWERP IN 10-0 RUN-RULE VICTORY



Raider baseball beat Antwerp 10-5. Jack Schoenauer was the overall hitter going 2-3 with a double, a single, a sacrifice fly, and 2 RBIs. Photo by Harlee Moore

HAVILAND — A dominant pitching performance paired with a timely offensive surge lifted Wayne Trace to a 10-0 shutout win over Antwerp on April 13 in baseball action.

After a quiet start, Wayne Trace broke through in the second inning with a run before erupting for six runs in the third to take control. The Raiders added three more in the fourth, ending the game early via the run rule despite recording just five hits on the day.

Jonathan Sterrett led the way on the mound, earning the win with four scoreless innings. He allowed just two hits while striking out four and walking one. Tanner Laukhuf closed things out with a clean fifth inning to complete the combined three-hit shutout.

Antwerp's Lucas Sproles took the loss, working 3 2/3 innings while allowing 10 runs—seven earned—on four hits, with seven walks. C.J.

Eaton recorded the final out for the Archers and gave up one hit.

At the plate, Sterrett also paced Wayne Trace, collecting a single and a double while driving in three runs. Carter Clemens added a double, run scored, and an RBI, while Carter Baumle also doubled and scored. Laukhuf chipped in a hit and scored twice, and Jack Schoenauer crossed the plate twice with an RBI.

Additional contributions came from Caden Sinn, Lucas Morehead, and others as Wayne Trace took advantage of seven walks and three Antwerp errors to generate offense.

Antwerp managed three hits in the game, led by Riley Smith with two singles, while Eaton added the team's other hit. However, the Archers were unable to string together any scoring opportunities against the Raiders' pitching duo.

WAYNE TRACE EXPLODES EARLY, ROLLS PAST ANTWERP 19-4



Raider softball beat Antwerp 19-4. Regan McGarvey was the winning pitcher shown here getting a strike against the Archers. Photo by Harlee Moore

HAVILAND — A dominant first inning set the tone for Wayne Trace on April 14, as the Raiders erupted for eight runs and never looked back in a 19-4 victory over Antwerp in softball action.

Wayne Trace's offense was relentless from the start, collecting 19 hits and capitalizing on four Antwerp errors to secure the run-rule win. The Raiders added four runs in the third inning and put the game out of reach with a seven-run fourth.

Antwerp finished with four runs on nine hits, with its lone scoring surge coming in the fourth inning.

Raegan McGarvey earned the win in the circle for Wayne Trace, pitching all five innings. She allowed four runs on nine hits while striking out five and walking three. Antwerp starter Alia Clem took the loss after surrendering eight runs in the opening inning, while Madison Schmidt worked the final three innings in relief.

At the plate, Wayne Trace showcased a balanced and powerful lineup. Sam Williams led the charge with three singles, a double, three runs scored, and an RBI. Alicia Bahena added a single and double while scoring three times and driving in two runs. Olivia Zartman contributed two hits, two runs, and a team-high four RBIs, while McGarvey helped her own cause with two doubles, a single, and two RBIs.

Additional offensive support came from Avery Noffsinger, Addyson LaBounty, Brooke Tigner, Olivia Tarlton, Kendall Folson, and Elly Rickard, as nearly every Raider in the lineup reached base and contributed to the scoring effort.

For Antwerp, Raelynne Zuber collected two hits and an RBI, while Alia Clem, Madison McCoy, and Hailey Clem each drove in runs. Maddilan Doster highlighted the effort with a double and a run scored.

(Continued from Page 6)

In the circle, Heritage's Adalina Bacon earned the shutout victory, allowing just three hits over five innings while striking out one and walking two.

Raegan McGarvey pitched well in the loss for Wayne Trace, giving up two runs—only one earned—on five hits over five innings, while striking out three and issuing one walk.

Despite the loss, Wayne Trace kept the game within reach throughout, but was unable to generate timely offense as Heritage used its late push to secure the win.

PARKWAY POWERS PAST ANTWERP IN FIVE-INNING CONTEST

ANTWERP — Parkway erupted early and never looked back, defeating Antwerp 17-1 in five innings on April 10.

Parkway wasted no time taking control, scoring 13 runs in the opening inning and adding two more in the second and one in the third to build a commanding lead. Antwerp managed its lone run in the first inning but was unable to generate additional offense as the game progressed.

Parkway finished with 17 runs on 21 hits and committed just one error, while Antwerp recorded one run on three hits and had seven errors.

Alia Clem accounted for much of Antwerp's offense, collecting a single and a double while scoring the team's only run. Raelynne Zuber added the other hit with a single.

Parkway's lineup produced strong performances throughout. Bryn Schoenleben led the charge with three singles, two runs scored, and three RBI,

PAULDING FFA CELEBRATES ITS 99TH ANNUAL FFA BANQUET



Pictured left to right are the 2026 Paulding FFA Officer Team: Nolan Schlatter, Remington Boroff, Gabriella Stork, Kinzley Collard, Vivienne Myers, Makenna Manz, Ava Leatherman, Delaney Johanns, Myrriah Manz, and President Darcy Taylor

By: Makenna Manz, Paulding FFA Reporter

On Saturday, April 11th, 2026 the Paulding FFA chapter held its 99th Annual FFA Banquet. Several people attended the banquet including community, alumni, and staff members. There were 395 people who attended the banquet. The theme for this year's banquet was "Time Marches On."

Several awards were given to community and FFA members at the banquet. Members who met the qualifications for Greenhand or Chapter degrees received them. We also recognized twelve students who have earned their state degrees; they will receive their certificates and pins at the State FFA Convention in May. Those members include: Avery Cooper, Kayleigh Dunham, Jayla Griffith, Mariah Klopfenstein, Mackenzie Leatherman, Kate Manz, Myrriah Manz, Gannon Parrett, Addison Pease, Estie Pease, Tori Schlatter, and Riley Stork. In addition, we recognized twelve members who will be receiving their American degrees at the FFA national convention this coming fall. The American degree is the highest degree an FFA member can receive. These members included: Matthew Bail, Anna Clemens, Harley Collins,

Grace Goings, Maci Kauser, Brooke Kilgore, Jalyn Klopfenstein, Jonathan Lipps, Marley Parrett, Hopeful Rose, Brooklyn Schlatter, and Kadence Thomas.

The Blue and Gold Award was given to three individuals to acknowledge all that they have done to help out the Paulding FFA chapter this year. This year's winners were Mr. Gary Gilbert, Heidi Kauser, and Mr. Jordan Streicher. The Honorary FFA degree was also awarded to Erin Johanns, Jeff Holtsberry, and Kim Coutts. Any member who participated in a CDE (career development event) throughout the year received a certificate and pin for their jacket for their outstanding work. Star awards were handed out to a select few students from each grade who showed leadership not only in the classroom, but also in their community and FFA programs and activities. Kendall Kohart and Makenna Manz received the star Greenhand, Ava Leatherman and Delaney Johanns received the star Chapter farmer, Myrriah Manz received the star 3rd year member, Jacob Harris received the star 4th year member, Remington Boroff received the Quiet leader award, Kinzley Collard received the star in Community Service, and

Darcy Taylor received the Ag Credit 110% award. The Paulding FFA Alumni awarded scholarships of \$200 to Marley Parrett (book scholarship), \$200 to Grace Goings (book scholarship), \$350 to Lucy Breier, \$500 to Kaitlynn Breedlove, \$750 to Jacob Harris, \$950 to Jackson Griffith, \$950 to Addison Pease, and \$1100 to Addison Hunt.

Chapter President, Addison Hunt, gave an inspirational speech encouraging members to find good friends. Finally, it was time for the installation of the new officers. The 2026-2027 officers are as follows: President- Darcy Taylor, Vice President- Myrriah Manz, Secretary- Delaney Johanns, Treasurer- Ava Leatherman, Reporter- Makenna Manz, Sentinel- Kinzley Collard, Student Advisor- Vivienne Myers, Parliamentarian- Gabby Stork, Chaplin- Remington Boroff, and Historian- Nolan Schlatter. We want to thank everyone who came out to the banquet and the community who made the great year we had possible!

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PAULDING HS ANNOUNCES STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Paulding High school March student of the month are: From L to R Freshman Conner Burkley, Sophomore: Gracie Ametewee, Junior: Esther Lemieux, Senior: Hunter Harwell

PAULDING PUTNAM CEO PRICE TO RETIRE IN JANUARY 2027 BOARD COMMITTS TO THOROUGH, MEMBER-FIRST SUCCESSION PROCESS

PAULDING, OH — Paulding Putnam announced today that Chief Executive Officer Randy Price will retire effective January 2027, following three years of distinguished service to the cooperative and its nearly 14,000 members across seven counties in northwest Ohio and northeast Indiana.

Price has led the cooperative through a period of significant growth and transformation. Under his leadership, Paulding Putnam successfully launched fiber internet service — approved by the board in 2024 and first installed for subscribers in fall 2025 — that has since expanded to nearly 650 miles of mainline fiber. The co-op also maintains more than 1,700 miles of electric lines serving both electric members and fiber internet subscribers across its service territory.

"This decision comes after careful consideration and with great appreciation for the opportunity to serve the Paulding Putnam members," Price says. "Leading Paulding Putnam has been one of the most rewarding professional experiences of my career. I am proud of what we have accomplished together by building an organization that is financially strong, competitive, reliable, and technically ready for the changes in society and the electric and internet industries."

Price added that he is confident in the company's long-term direction and leadership.

"To ensure a smooth and orderly transition, I am fully



Randy Price

committed to supporting the board and executive team during the succession process," Price said. "I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the board for its guidance, trust, and partnership throughout my tenure. I am also deeply thankful to the management team and employees whose dedication and professionalism have been central to our success."

Board Chairman Adam Schnipke praised Price's contributions, stating he "has been an absolute pleasure to work with."

"Randy is such a good, caring, genuine human being, always doing what is right for our members and never afraid to face challenges that arise," Schnipke said. "He has done a remarkable job of helping Paulding Putnam get to 'the next level' and setting us up for success in the future."

Schnipke also cited Price's ability to "surround himself with a talented team, which will prove key with the transition to new leadership."

Regarding the search process, Schnipke noted that the board is working with a third party on the recruiting process, working efficiently for a smooth transition.

"We want to make sure the recruitment process is

properly executed and the next CEO is the best selection we can make for our members of today and the future," Schnipke said.

Randy Price became just the sixth CEO in the cooperative's 91-year history — a legacy of stable, mission-driven leadership that the board is committed to honoring through this transition.

Additional details about the search process and transition timeline will be shared as they become available on the cooperative's website: www.PPEEC.coop.

PAULDING COUNTY COURT RECORDS

Criminal/Traffic Disposition Report

Lacy L. Oliver of Defiance, Ohio, was convicted of operating a vehicle under the influence. She was fined \$565 and ordered to pay \$105 in court costs. Oliver was sentenced to 180 days in jail, with 177 days suspended, and received an operator's license suspension from April 8, 2026, through April 8, 2027. Special conditions include serving one day incarcerated. Related charges of operating without a license, marked lanes, and a seat belt violation were dismissed.

Dennis L. Schmucker of Hicksville, Ohio, was convicted of driving while texting. He was fined \$150 and ordered to pay \$100 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

Samuel L. Landis of Lorain, Ohio, entered a no contest plea and was convicted of driving while texting. He was ordered to pay \$100 in court costs.

Korbin D. Showalter of Oakwood, Ohio, was convicted of a marked lanes violation. He was fined \$55 and ordered to pay \$95 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

Christina N. Huber of Wauseon, Ohio, was convicted of driving while texting. She was ordered to pay \$95 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

Dalton M. Adkins of Paulding, Ohio, was convicted of domestic violence. He was ordered to pay \$545 in court costs. Adkins was sentenced to 30 days in jail, with 20 days suspended. Special conditions include payment of all costs, placement on standard probation, completion of an evaluation and counseling and treatment, 30 hours of community service, completion of the Keeping It in Check class, completion of an online course, a risk assessment, and no alcohol or drugs.

Lei Liu of Windsor, Ontario, had a charge of a marked lanes violation dismissed. In a related case, Liu was convicted of impaired alertness. He was fined \$150 and ordered to pay \$105 in court costs.

Randall J. Bachman of Oxford, Ohio, was convicted of a stop sign violation. He was fined \$55 and ordered to pay \$95 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

Scott J. Funk of Cecil, Ohio, was convicted of a seat belt violation while driving. He was fined \$30 and ordered to pay \$57 in court costs. The case was waived by the defendant.

PAULDING ELEMENTARY MARCH MINDSET MARVELS



Paulding Elementary School recently announced its March Mindset Marvels. Pictured above are (bottom row, l-r): William Cunningham, Brayden Bland, Charli Grindstaff, Kelsi Coresel, Penelope Brobst, and Kase Salas; (middle row, l-r): Obi Taylor, Avery Branch, Emberly VanVlerah, Alejandro Rico-Zarate, and Joslin Glowinski; (top row, l-r): Angel Marcos Lara, Kye Rohlf, Molly Eckhart, Aubrey Manz, William Arend, and Jace Hogans. Not pictured: Chance Turner

(Continued from Page 1)

of Paulding. Soil testing confirmed that the fill dirt is clean, allowing continued remediation and pond bank leveling work to begin. Once final costs are known, the committee will evaluate steps for the east pond. The center pond on the property will remain untouched due to overhead AEP transmission lines. In regard to the 2026 brownfield applications submitted earlier this year, the Ohio Department of Development (ODOD) has not yet announced project approvals.

Paulding County Economic Development Director Tim Copey provided an update on behalf of T&M Associates, the environmental consultant for Arvin Environmental, owner of the former Grizzly Brake factory site in Paulding. Nearly 14 acres of foliage has been cleared to prepare for a solar field installation on the site. The clearing allows T&M to complete final soil sampling to confirm the required 24-inch soil cap over the remaining asbestos on the property, per Ohio EPA standards. Additional fill dirt will be added if needed. Once environmental work is complete, a new fence will be installed to split the property and separate the 19 acres of remaining wetlands from the solar development area. Construction of the solar field will then begin, allowing the potential of the first income-producing use of this site since 1980. The solar project development is expected to continue through 2027.

The committee then reviewed progress on the commercial and residential blight program. Abby White of Maumee Valley Planning Organization (MVPO) shared that ODOD has allocated \$230,000 for Paulding County's 2026 blight removal efforts. White estimates that 10-12 properties can be remediated with this year's funding. The project list has been reviewed and approved by the committee and will be submitted once the ODOD portal opens. White also provided updates on several 2025 projects not yet complete and are still in the final stages of completion.

Grady Vogel, also with MVPO, reported continued progress on the county's Welcome Home Ohio (WHO) housing rehabilitation grant. Paulding County received \$300,000 in 2025 to complete

ANTWERP STUDENTS HONORED WITH ALL-OHIO OUTSTANDING STUDENT LEADER AWARD



Pictured are: Josie Hahn, Raelyne Zuber, Harlee Moore and CJ Eaton earned the All-Ohio Outstanding Student Leader Award from OASL (Ohio Association of Student Leaders). These four students were nominated by advisors Jassmine Reyes and Greta Kosch.

OASL Description of the All-Ohio Outstanding Student Leader Award: "Student leaders are special people. They are givers who care about others. Within this group is a smaller group that

goes beyond what is required. These are the students who stay that extra hour, who work harder, who say "thanks" more often, who lead by example, and are respected by their teachers and peers."

ten affordable housing residential rehab or build projects by June 2027. Vogel announced that the renovation and sale of the home at 714 N. Main Street, Paulding, is now complete. Work is ongoing at 108 S. Main Street, Cecil, and 621 Sugar Street, Paulding. With one project complete and only two projects still open, the committee will begin searching and identifying additional rehabilitation homes.

Additional committee business included:

- Copey shared updates from recent Paulding Village

Council meetings regarding the former theatre lot development. This is a Land Bank-owned property under a purchase agreement with Foundations Behavioral Health, contingent on approval of a village building permit.

• Committee members attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Paulding VFW Veterans Memorial located at 220 North Williams Street. This site is a former Land Bank property that was remediated and prepared for redevelopment, then sold to the VFW.

• The committee approved

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CAROL BLODGETT CELEBRATES OHIO AND PAULDING COUNTY THROUGH INTRICATE DOT ART



Pictured here is Angel Steiner (left), Carol Blodgett, artisan (middle); and Bryce Steiner (right).

Local artist Carol Blodgett is bringing history and community pride to life through a unique form of expression—dot painting.

Blodgett, who has practiced the intricate technique for the past seven years, recently completed two large-scale works celebrating Ohio and Paulding County. Each piece was created on a wood slab and designed as a tribute to America's upcoming 250th anniversary.

The project began when two large slabs were made available to her through a connection with Wayne Trace, where her grandson attends school. Inspired by the opportunity, Blodgett set out to create a visual tribute to the state of Ohio. The finished piece features a bald eagle along with carefully selected facts that highlight the state's identity and heritage.

Encouraged by the success of the first work, Blodgett followed it with a second slab dedicated to Paulding County. This piece incorporates the state bird, the cardinal, along with notable facts about the county and a depiction of the Paulding County flag—something Blodgett herself did not realize existed until beginning the project. She was able to borrow a flag from the Paulding County Commissioners to ensure accuracy in her design.

Blodgett's artwork is created using acrylic paint, applied one dot at a time in a meticulous process that requires patience and precision. She discovered the technique in 2019 after watching an online demonstration and has since developed her own style. Her work occasionally appears at local craft shows, including the Apple Festival in Van Wert.

Currently, the two completed slabs are displayed at the entrance of the Paulding Eagles, where visitors can view the detailed craftsmanship up close. Blodgett hopes the county-themed piece, in particular, will find a broader audience and potentially be displayed in communities throughout Paulding County.

In addition, Blodgett recently received another slab of wood from West Bend Printing owner Bryce Steiner, which she used to create a new piece of dot art. Upon completing the work, she presented it as a gift to Steiner and his wife, Angel, as a token of appreciation.

Through her work, Blodgett not only showcases her artistic talent but also highlights the history and identity of the region, one carefully placed dot at a time.

a \$5,000 investment into the Paulding County Sheriff Auction website to position the Land Bank to bid on future foreclosed property opportunities.

The Land Bank reported a current account balance of \$221,149.

The Paulding County Land Bank continues to advance projects that strengthen neighborhoods, return properties to productive use, and support long-term community development throughout

the county. They have previously completed projects in all 12 townships and all 11 villages.

PAULDING COUNTY DESIGNATED AN ADVANCED LIFE SCIENCES READY COMMUNITY

PAULDING COUNTY—Ohio Life Sciences has officially designated Paulding County as an Advanced Life Sciences Ready Community, recognizing the county's

strong foundation for supporting growth in the biotech and life sciences sectors.

This designation highlights communities that demonstrate readiness for industry investment through workforce strength, available sites, supportive zoning, and a commitment to fostering life-science innovation. The Advanced level reflects Paulding County's preparedness to attract and support companies in biotechnology, medical research, pharmaceuticals, and related fields.

A key factor contributing to Paulding County's selection is its central geographic location between several major medical and research hubs, including Fort Wayne, Defiance, and Lima. This proximity provides access to larger health-care systems, talent pipelines, and collaborative opportunities, all of which strengthen the county's position as a competitive site for life-science investment.

As part of the designation, Paulding County will be featured on the Ohio Life Sciences (OLS) website and included in statewide communications promoting Life Sciences Ready Communities. OLS will also share the announcement through social media venues to increase visibility among industry leaders and site selectors.

Ohio Life Sciences notes that the Life Science Ready Community program is designed to spotlight locations across Ohio that are best positioned for life-science investment and expansion, helping

companies identify communities with the infrastructure and workforce needed to support long-term growth.

Tim Copsy, Director with the Paulding County Economic Development office commented, "We are extremely blessed to receive this designation and are thankful to the State of Ohio for seeing the potential here in north-west Ohio, and specifically in Paulding County. We are ready to assist investors in future development that will enhance the life science industry in the region."

Paulding County is proud to receive this recognition and looks forward to leveraging this designation to support future economic development opportunities.

FIELD REPORTS FROM OHIO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE OFFICERS

Central Ohio - Wildlife District One

In the fall of 2025, State Wildlife Officer Mark Williams Jr., assigned to Franklin County, investigated a trapping complaint in Columbus. Officer Williams discovered a cage trap containing a dead squirrel on a rooftop. Officer Williams determined that an employee of a commercial nuisance trapping company had left the trap unchecked for 10 consecutive days. The suspect was charged and found guilty of failing to check traps daily. The individual paid \$250 in fines and \$98 in court costs. This was the suspect's second conviction for failure to check traps.

In February, State Wildlife Officer John Coffman, assigned to Fayette County, presented at a Fayette Firearms 4H Club meeting. This youth club, with members ranging in age from 9 to 19, focuses on firearms, firearm safety, and outdoor projects. Fayette County Fish and Game presented a check to the 4H Club that evening for its dedication to the outdoor pursuits. These organizations and many like them provide excellent opportunities for outdoor and firearm experiences in Ohio.

Northwest Ohio - Wildlife District Two

While patrolling the Maumee River during the spring walleye run, State Wildlife Officer Jason Porinchok, assigned to Putnam County, and Wildlife Officer Supervisor Troy Reimund contacted four individuals who were fishing at Orleans Park. The officers observed the anglers discard beverage cans and a plastic bag in the river and along the riverbank. The anglers received citations for stream littering and were ordered to pay \$1,000 in fines and court costs. After documenting the litter, the officers properly disposed of the trash.

State Wildlife Officer Levi Farley, assigned to Paulding County, received a call about a white-tailed deer with a front leg injury. After responding, Officer Farley observed the deer stand and run for about 50 yards. He determined the deer could survive the injury and was not suffering. The callers were advised to call back if the situation changed, and Officer Farley would monitor the situation. Deer are resilient and can often survive leg injuries. Never approach or attempt to capture injured wildlife. Instead, call 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543) for guidance.

Northeast Ohio - Wildlife

The West Bend News

Sudoku Puzzle

6		8		4	2				
					5	6			
						9	2	4	
	5	7	4		9		6		
			6	2					
9	2				6				
				5	7		4	8	
	8	4		1					
							3	7	9

Answers to "Sudoku puzzle on Page 11"

VANTAGE CAREER CENTER HOSTS ALL BOARDS DINNER AND MONTHLY MEETING



Vantage Superintendent, Rick Turner.

Van Wert, Ohio — Vantage Career Center hosted its monthly board meeting on Thursday, April 9, 2026, followed by the annual All Boards Dinner, bringing together school board members from partner districts across the Vantage region.

The evening opened with a welcome and introduction from Superintendent Rick Turner, followed by an invocation from Tim Fitzpatrick, Board President. Administrators and board members from across the district were in attendance.

Guests enjoyed a meal prepared by Vantage's Culinary Arts students under the direction of Chef Luke Trinosky, with assistance from Culinary Aide Emily Hanenkratt. Music for the evening was provided by the Parkway High School Band, directed by Mrs. Amy Drake.

The evening emphasized collaboration and a shared

commitment to career-technical education and economic development. Brent Stevens, Executive Director of the Van Wert Area Economic Development Corporation, served as the keynote speaker, sharing insights on the local data center and continued economic growth in Van Wert.

State Representative Roy Klopfenstein, a Vantage alumnus and Alumni Hall of Fame member, was also in attendance and took part in the Hall of Fame induction ceremony. He presented official commendations from the Ohio House of Representatives to this year's inductees, Marcia Osenga and Les Bowen. The inductees were also recognized with remarks shared by Vantage Career Center Director, Ben Winans.

For more information about Vantage Career Center and its programs, visit www.vantagecareercenter.com.

District Three

State Wildlife Officers Marino Pellegrini and Matt Madgar, assigned to Portage and Geauga counties, respectively, presented a program showcasing the state's wildlife diversity at several schools in the Amish communities of northeast Ohio. Demonstrations included hands-on activities for the children with furs and bones of various wildlife species. Officer Pellegrini and K-9 Officer Moose also showed off some of the skills that make K-9 Officer Moose a valuable tool in wildlife law enforcement.

State Wildlife Officer Matt Madgar, assigned to Geauga County, investigated a suspicious white-tailed deer harvest. Officer Madgar learned the buck had been checked in

for another hunter who had reached the county bag limit for the 2025-26 season. The hunter was found guilty of possession of untagged deer parts and failure to properly game check a deer. The individual was ordered to forfeit the deer and crossbow; pay \$1,123 in court costs, fines, and restitution; and serve one year of probation.

Southeast Ohio - Wildlife District Four

During the 2025 white-tailed deer gun hunting season, State Wildlife Officers Darin Abbott, assigned to Lawrence County, and Levi Boggs, assigned to Gallia County, responded to a call about unlawfully taken deer. The officers contacted three suspects and found a total of

(Continued on Page 10)

LEGAL NOTICE FOR SERVICE BY PUBLICATION

IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF PAULDING COUNTY, OHIO

MIDFIRST BANK, Plaintiff,

vs.

UNKNOWN ADMINISTRATOR, EXECUTOR OR FIDUCIARY, UNKNOWN

HEIRS, NEXT OF KIN, UNKNOWN SPOUSES, DEVISEES, LEGATEES,

CREDITORS AND BENEFICIARIES OF THE ESTATE OF CARL E. NULL, ET. AL.,

DEFENDANTS,

Case No. CI-26-053

TO: the Unknown Administrator, Executor or Fiduciary, Unknown Heirs, Next of Kin, Unknown Spouses, Devisees, Legatees, Creditors and Beneficiaries of The Estate of Carl E. Null, you will take notice that on March 5, 2026, Plaintiff, filed a Complaint for foreclosure in the Paulding County Court of Common Pleas, being Case No. CI 26 053, alleging that there is due to the Plaintiff the sum of \$75,622.67, plus interest at 4.750% per annum from June 01, 2025, plus late charges and fees applicable to the terms of a

FILED PAULDING COUNTY SARAH JO HARPEL CLERK OF COURTS

2026 APR -6 PM 3:01

Promissory Note secured by a Mortgage on the real property, which has a street address of 12705 Road 12, Scott, OH 45886, being permanent Parcel Number: 05-36S-007-02.

Plaintiff further alleges that by reason of a default in payment of said Promissory Note, the conditions of said Mortgage have been broken and the same has become absolute.

Plaintiff prays that the Defendant named above be required to answer and assert any interest in said real property or be forever barred from asserting any interest therein, for foreclosure of said mortgage, marshalling of liens, and the sale of said real property, and that the proceeds of said sale be applied according to law.

Said Defendant is required to file an Answer on or before the twenty-eighth day following the last date of Publication.

Brian S. Jackson, 0088314
Crystal L. Saresky, 0091328
Brandon W. Ellis, 0099077
Austin R. Decker, 0100918
Christina R. Griffith, 0102095
Alexander D. Weisser, 0103287
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Email: kycvfilings@rsag.com

WE TRIED



We tried but we lost. This week 68 teams tried out for the national championship in basketball. One team won and 67 lost. Counting teams didn't make it, probably hundreds lost. I was watching the final game last night that was extremely close. The game was decided by a single bounce of the ball. An entire season determined by a single play, which way the ball happened to bounce.

This week I received news that a high school buddy had died. I had seen him nearly every week in town and he was always healthy, but I had heard that he had a fall several months ago. Several days ago someone told me he was nearing the end.

As I read the obit, he had three children, 12 grand children and six great grandchildren with two on the way. He had been married twice, divorced his first wife, but the second was a better choice. He had been a delivery truck driver, but he was quite successful. A very hard worker.

Out of high school he found a job driving a Coke truck, and did quite well at it, talking grocers into running Coke specials. He married the daughter of a factory owner, and went to work for his father-in-law, but he was a truck driver there. He knew all of the ins and out of the business. You might say he helped to run the business out of a delivery truck. He and the boss's daughter got a divorce, but he still stayed with her father's company.

Later his son took over the business and he was still a big part of it. But he was content to be a delivery truck driver. By that time he had remarried. I remember the girl that he was sweet on in high school but that was as far as it went. I heard that she married and her husband was killed in an accident. We never saw her again and she never came to any class reunions.

I never saw my closest buddy in high school after commencement night. He lived with his mother and I'd heard they moved to South Dakota. We had perhaps a dozen 5-year class reunions and no one was ever able to locate him. His name was Larry Jack.

One thing that happened in my lifetime was that my Coke truck buddy did not go on our senior class trip. He lived on a farm and he was too busy or some excuse. It was one of the highlights of our life, but he never seemed to regret it. Guess it was too late anyway. I guess you might say we won some and we lost

some. We tried our best. Sometimes our best was good enough and sometimes not.

As I see the row of bricks up ahead I can see the finish line. We have crossed the starting line, and somehow made it to the first turn. Down the front shoot and into turn 2. We have exited turn 2 and headed down the back stretch, and into turn three. through turn 3 and into the back straight away. Through the back straight away and into turn 4. Now we have made it through turn 4 and are heading for the finish line. Now we see the row of bricks up ahead, and are just a few seconds away from the finish line.

Just heard a preacher quoting a verse, in this life you will have trouble. I guess we've had our share of trouble, but any race no matter if it's 500 mi or longer we need to end it with a sprint. Our race has been a long distance run, you might say a marathon, but in the days that we have left we will try our best.

— James Neuhouser

(Continued from Page 9)

18 violations. The suspects paid a combined total of \$6,275 in restitution, fines, and court costs in Lawrence County Municipal Court. All three individuals lost hunting privileges for two years, must complete community service, and were sentenced to jail time, suspended. All evidence, including six unlawfully taken deer, was forfeited to the state.

State Wildlife Officer Anthony Lemle, assigned to Noble County, recently completed a case which occurred in December 2024 regarding theft of timber from state property. An individual pleaded guilty to theft, a felony of the fifth degree. The defendant was ordered to pay \$2,067 in restitution and sentenced to 60 days in jail and five years of community control. A second individual was ordered to pay \$2,067 in restitution and sentenced to 30 days in jail and five years of community control. Three chainsaws and six walnut logs were forfeited to the Ohio Division of Wildlife.

Southwest Ohio - Wildlife District Five

Wildlife District Five recently held Hunter Education Instructor Appreciation Day in recognition of volunteer instructors. The event was hosted at the Hamilton Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America in Butler County. State Wildlife Officer Andy Dowdell, assigned to Butler County, and Wildlife District

Manager Eric Lamb joined more than 50 people in attendance. The day included a wild game dish competition, updates from Ohio Division of Wildlife staff, and the opportunity to check out various new pieces of technology relevant to hunter education. The winning dish, as voted on by attendees, was smoked venison pastrami.

State Wildlife Officer Jasmine Grossnickle, assigned to Miami County, and Wildlife Officer Supervisor Matt Hoehn conducted stream litter surveillance on the Great Miami River near Tipp City. The officers observed two individuals on inerttubes discard glass bottles in the river and along the shore. Unfortunately, the individuals were not in an area where they could be contacted to prevent further littering. The officers noted at least 11 glass bottles and other pieces of trash that were discarded. The officers contacted the two suspects farther downstream and issued summonses for littering in or along the Great Miami River. Each suspect paid a \$250 waiver through Miami County Municipal Court for the violation

ODOT KICKING OFF ANOTHER RECORD CONSTRUCTION SEASON

Spring in Ohio means orange barrels and renewed investment in Ohio's infrastructure. The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) is kicking off a record-breaking \$3.4 billion construction season statewide.

The 2026 construction season includes a total of 977 projects. This year, 739 bridges and approximately 4,562 miles of roadway, equivalent to driving from Columbus to San Diego, California, and back, are set to be improved. Eighty cents of every dollar invested this year will go directly to preservation of existing roads and bridges.

This construction season will also include the start of 174 safety projects. Ohio continues to spend more per capita than any other state when it comes to roadway safety.

"As a state that makes and moves things, we must have a safe transportation system that is well maintained," said Governor Mike DeWine. "As they do each year, our ODOT teams will be making enhancements to Ohio's roadways to better protect everyone traveling on them."

Since the beginning of the DeWine Administration in 2019, ODOT has invested \$15.5 billion into 6,067 projects across the state.

"This record-setting construction season is a testament to ODOT's focus on building a more resilient transportation system and saving lives," said ODOT Director Pamela Boratyn. "This investment positions Ohio as the heart of the nation's supply chain and continues to fuel the state's economic engine."

Locally, ODOT kicked off highway construction season today at the former weigh station on Interstate 75 in Wood County where work to construct 16 commercial truck parking spaces at the site, located north of State Route 281, began March 2 and is expected to complete mid April.

A total of 144 truck parking spaces will be constructed at decommissioned highway weigh stations throughout

ODNR KICKS OFF AMERICA 250 HIKING CHALLENGES TO CELEBRATE NATION'S 250TH BIRTHDAY



COLUMBUS, Ohio — To help celebrate America's 250th birthday, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Parks and Watercraft is inviting outdoor enthusiasts of all ages to take part in a new statewide hiking challenge designed to showcase the beauty, history, and accessibility of Ohio's natural spaces.

Beginning now and continuing through the rest of 2026, visitors can participate in the America 250 - ODNR Challenge, choosing between a 25-mile family-friendly option or a more ambitious 250-mile adventure. Both challenges encourage participants to explore designated trails in Ohio's state parks, forests, nature preserves, and wildlife areas.

Both hiking challenges are available now through the end of the year for visitors exploring Ohio's natural spaces.

"Ohioans have incredible natural spaces to explore, and these challenges give families, friends, and adventurers a fun way to celebrate America's 250th birthday while enjoying the great trails on our public lands," said ODNR Director Mary Mertz. "Every mile tells a story—of our land, our history, and the people who call Ohio home."

America 250 - Family-Friendly ODNR Challenge (25 miles)

Perfect for families and casual hikers, this 25-mile challenge highlights accessible and easy-to-navigate trails across Ohio. Participants earn a digital badge for each completed hike, along with a limited-edition sticker for completing all 25 miles. This accessible challenge ensures everyone can join the celebration, from first-time hikers to seasoned explorers.

America 250 - ODNR Challenge (250 miles)

For those looking for a bigger adventure, the 250-mile version offers a deeper journey into Ohio's landscapes and history. Hikers earn a digital badge for each hike they complete, a sticker at the 25-mile mark, and a special, limited edition commemorative coin for the first 250 participants for completing all 250 miles on the designated trails.

Both challenges are open now, and participants can log miles at their own pace.

To learn more and get started, visit the America 250 - ODNR challenge page on OuterSpatial (<https://outerspatial.link/lcaAJQ-ceP1b>). Participants will have until December 31 to complete their miles. After the

challenges conclude, ODNR staff will contact eligible participants regarding prizes through the email associated with their OuterSpatial account.

With thousands of miles of trails on ODNR properties, Ohio offers endless opportunities to connect with nature. Whether you're chasing waterfalls, walking through wildflower meadows, or discovering historic sites along the way, the America 250 - ODNR hiking challenges provide a meaningful way to honor our nation's journey while exploring Ohio's great outdoors.

Recognized as the No. 1 state park system in America with the 2025 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management, the ODNR Division of Parks and Watercraft provides exceptional outdoor recreation and boating opportunities by balancing outstanding customer service, education, and conservation of Ohio's 76 state parks and waterways.

ODNR ensures a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all. Visit the ODNR website at ohiodnr.gov (<https://ohiodnr.gov/>)

Ohio as part of the state's response to a national need for truck parking.

In addition to converting highway weigh stations, the first projects to construct truck parking within a larger statewide initiative will begin this year. In northwest Ohio, 65 spaces will be constructed along U.S. 33 at Willipie Street in Auglaize County, and 50 spaces will be added at the eastbound and westbound rest areas on U.S. 30 in Wyandot County.

"Sleep is key to safety, and finding a safe place to sleep is more of a challenge than it should be for our nation's truckers, and it is a challenge I have faced too many times during my time behind the wheel," said Scott Greneth, former truck driver and truck parking advocate. "ODOT's multi-pronged approach to increasing truck parking capacity will lead to safer roads for everyone," he said.

Other notable projects in northwest Ohio beginning in 2026:

- Allen & Hancock County - Interstate 75 Resurfacing The \$3.1 million dollar project will microsurface I-75 between the Auglaize County line to the concrete pavement just south of the 4th Street interchange in Allen County, and between County Road 313 and U.S. 224 in Hancock County. Work is scheduled for completion by this fall.

- Wood County - I-75 and I-475 Resurfacing A project to resurface Interstate 75 and Interstate 475 in the vicinity of the Perrysburg interchange, and Interstate 475 from Inter-

state 75 to the Maumee River. The project also includes leveling the approach slabs leading onto and off the W. Dussel Drive/Salisbury Road bridge over I-475. Construction is estimated to be complete this fall.

- Henry County - Replacement of existing pavement on U.S. 6/U.S. 24 from the U.S. 6 interchange to the Maumee River, Henry County. The project will occur over three construction seasons.

- Construction of roundabouts: State Route 117/State Route 501, Allen County State Route 15/Ralston Avenue, Defiance County U.S. 68/State Route 31, Hardin County

U.S. 20A and Strayer Road, Lucas County

U.S. 20 and State Street, Sandusky County

U.S. 224/Lincoln Highway, Van Wert County

Local projects that will continue:

- Reconstruction and re-configuration of the U.S. 23 interchange with State Route 51 (Monroe Street/Alexis Road), city of Sylvania, Lucas County.

- Interchange construction at U.S. 24 and County Road 17D, Henry County.

- Roundabout construction at State Route 269 and Danbury Road, Ottawa County

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

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SHE LOVED

Dotting My Teas By: Marlene Oxender

I remember a conversation with my Aunt Isabel about names from long ago making a comeback. She was amazed that her own first name had become popular once again. After so many years of being the only Isabel, she was surrounded by little Isabels.

My first name is a blend of two names – Maria and Magdalene. Maria means “beloved.” Magdalene means “of Magdala,” a village near the Sea of Galilee. Marlene, therefore, is often associated with Mary Magdalene, a woman whose writings and story have been revisited in recent years and whose role as a devoted disciple of Jesus is now more widely recognized.

Not long after we’re born, we hear our spoken name. We learn where our home will be and who our family members are. We learn a belief system, and over time grow into the person we are today.

My Aunt Isabel will be remembered for her sweet personality. Like many women of her generation, she was a farm wife and homemaker. I remember the frosted bunny cakes she made for our Easter gatherings. She baked two round layer cakes, using one to form the bunny’s face, while the other was cut into wedges to create its bowtie and tall ears.

She used jelly beans for his eyes and licorice for his

whiskers. His fur was made of coconut. Life was good as we chose the piece of cake we thought would work best for us.

While searching online for a picture of one of those bunny cakes, I came upon a photo of a sugar cookie recipe that had been etched upon a tombstone. After reading the recipe, I remember thinking, Now there’s a woman who loved.

Although I didn’t know the lady who had arranged for her cookie recipe to be etched in stone, I could describe her. She wore an apron. Her kitchen was light and pretty, probably yellow. She spent her morning hours in the garden and her afternoons in the kitchen.

Her living room was cozy. Doilies in place. Houseplants blooming. A candy dish was part of the décor – gum drops in the springtime and candy corn in the autumn months. It was a simple life.

When it came time to sort through this woman’s estate, her handwritten recipe cards were like souvenirs to the family. You could say she was an Aunt Isabel.

Life is a funny thing. We’re here to learn and grow. To gain wisdom. To leave things like recipes and stories behind – written on paper or carved in stone. In Mary Magdalene’s case, her words were preserved in ancient text and rediscovered centuries after she’d written them.

One of the best things about living with passion is how our legacy takes care of itself. In the end, how we cared for each other isn’t measured by what remains visible, but rather by the memories we made together—and the familiar comforts that quietly etch themselves upon the hearts of those we loved.

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

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THE HEALING HEARTH by Angel: Salves, Soaps, Beard Oils, Essential Oil Rollers, Luffas. Text 419-258-0656 for more info.

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

RAIN TECH SEAMLESS GUTTERS, 419-258-1818 14-16

LAWN CARE FOR THE HOMEOWNER

Planting Grass Seed
 Many of you will be planting grass seed to either fill in bare spots in your yard or thicken your lawn by overseeding. Here are some tips from seed selection to the first mowing to ensure your seeding is a success!

The first step is selecting a grass seed. Make sure you insist on top quality seed so you do not plant weeds. “Bargain” grass seed mixes are often full of weed seeds, undesirable grasses, immature seeds, and even filler material to make the package larger. Once it is planted, you must live with the results - sometimes ugly - for years. The few dollars more it costs to buy top quality grass seed is one of the best homeowner investments you can make. Investing in high quality seed now can save money in long term maintenance of your lawn. For more information about grass seed types, please contact us here at Grabill & Woodburn Hardware.

Next, prepare the “seedbed” by working up the soil to give the seed a place to lodge and take root. Soil particles from pea to marble size are ideal. But be careful of working the soil too finely. Too fine of soil particles can lead the surface to crust-over and dry out too quickly. If you are over-seeding, large swathes of thin shallow furrows should be cut into the soil with a slicing machine. The seed must have good seed-to-soil contact in order to grow.

Then, sow the seed evenly using a broadcast, drop, or handheld spreader to do the job. Spreading large areas by hand is a mistake because it is almost impossible to get consistent coverage. If the coverage is uneven, the grass will sprout in patches. To cover the seed, simply go over the area lightly with the back of a leaf or garden rake. Alternatively, drag a light object, such as a doormat, over the seeded areas.

Using a starter fertilizer the same day you seed will

make a world of difference in your results and help your lawn get off to a healthy start. A starter fertilizer has high phosphorus content to stimulate early root development. It is also time-released to provide nutrients to the grass plants when they need them. This makes your seedlings grow faster and develops a thicker and greener lawn. Agricultural fertilizers like 12-12-12 do not make good starter fertilizers because they release their nutrients too quickly. Once the grass seeds have germinated, there is nothing left of the agricultural fertilizers for the young plants to use.

Mulch only if necessary. Consider mulching on sloping areas, such as hillsides, or to reduce the frequency of watering. A mulch can be clean weed-free straw or peat moss. Simply scatter a light amount over the area-just enough to provide a light shading. The seedbed should be clearly visible through the mulch. Young seedlings can suffocate if the mulch is too thick.

Watering is critical to young seedlings throughout all growing stages. The seedbed should be kept moist. It is much better to water frequently rather than deeply. Only the top inch of soil needs to be kept moist, either by watering or rainfall. As seedlings sprout, watering becomes even more critical. Tender young plants will die if moisture is not available to them.

When the young plants have developed into mature grasses, mowing can begin as soon as there is anything to cut with the mower set at about 1-1/2 inches high. Do not mow when the soil is overly wet because it can damage your newly planted grass. Eight weeks after the new seedlings sprout, you should follow-up with an application of Weed & Feed to enhance growth and further eliminate any undesirable weeds.

Jim Gerig
 Jonathan Green Lawn Consultant
 Grabill & Woodburn Hardware

PLANTING THE FUTURE: BUCKEYE STATE TREE NURSERY CELEBRATES FIRST DISTRIBUTION OF SEEDLINGS

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Forestry is distributing the first round of seedlings from the Buckeye State Tree Nursery. Seedlings will be used for several conservation projects across Ohio this spring. Since its launch in 2024, the Buckeye State Tree Nursery has planted approximately 600,000 seeds.

“My dad knew a lot about trees, and he always said, ‘the best time to plant a tree is now!’” said Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. “We opened the Buckeye State Tree Nursery two years ago, and I look forward to these tree plantings that represent Ohio’s promise and hope of the future coming to life.”

Governor Mike DeWine opened the Buckeye State Tree Nursery in 2024. The nursery is now distributing seedlings for planting projects across the state.

The first conservation project to plant some of these year-old seedlings is the Northwest Ohio Windbreak Program, which is an interagency program that assists landowners in establishing windbreaks on, or adjacent to, crop fields to prevent erosion, protect crops, and provide wildlife habitat.

The seedlings from the Buckeye State Tree Nursery are grown in biodegradable paper plugs, which encourages the development of a dense, fibrous root system, will also be planted for various conservation projects including mine reclamation to reduce acid mine drainage along streams, reforestation efforts in wildlife areas, increasing tree cover in Ohio’s state parks, and for H2Ohio (https://h2.ohio.gov/) projects. Seedlings will also be used to complete ODNR’s commitment to plant 250,000 trees in partnership with the Girl Scouts of the USA, with the final planting taking place at Deer Creek Wildlife Area this May.

“The Buckeye State Tree Nursery is a valuable tool that will help us strengthen forest restoration efforts and expand habitat across Ohio,” said Division of Forestry Chief Dan Balsler. “We’re excited to begin offering these locally adapted tree seedlings to support projects that deliver real, on-the-ground benefits for landowners and increase forest cover in the state.”

The public can now order

6	9	8	1	4	2	7	3	5
4	7	2	3	9	5	6	8	1
3	1	5	7	6	8	9	2	4
1	5	7	4	3	9	8	6	2
8	4	6	2	7	1	5	9	3
9	2	3	5	8	6	4	1	7
2	3	9	6	5	7	1	4	8
7	8	4	9	1	3	2	5	6
5	6	1	8	2	4	3	7	9

Sudoku solution from page 9

tree seedlings from the Buckeye State Tree Nursery.

The Buckeye State Tree Nursery’s focus is to cultivate native species from local sources that are adapted to Ohio’s growing conditions for ODNR and partners’ initiatives. Unlike bare-root seedlings, seedlings at the nursery are grown in biodegradable paper plugs. As roots grow, they extend beyond the plug and are air-pruned at the edges. This process encourages the development of a dense, fibrous root system rather than circling roots commonly seen in traditional containers. This method promotes quicker seedling establishment after transplanting. This plug system also allows for a longer planting window and reduces the potential for root issues when planting.

If members of the public would like to purchase seedlings from the Buckeye State Tree Nursery, the nursery is now accepting tree orders. Interested parties can reach out via email to BST-Nursery@dnr.ohio.gov (mailto:BSTNursery@dnr.ohio.gov) to receive an order form with available species. A minimum order of 50 trees is required, and orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Payments will need to be paid by check, and all seedlings must be picked up at 5940 Memory Road, Zanesville, Ohio 43701.

Check out ODNR’s YouTube Channel (https://youtu.be/Dy6o4oyD6tM) to see how to plant seedlings that are grown in biodegradable plugs. Available species at the nursery include American chestnut, common persimmon, butternut, black walnut, American plum, black cherry, white oak, chinquapin oak, pin oak, northern red oak, and Shumard oak.

The Ohio Division of Forestry promotes the wise use and sustainable management of Ohio’s public and private woodlands. To learn more about Ohio’s woodlands, visit forestry.ohiodnr.gov.

HELP WANTED:
Innovative Assembly Services, LLC
 109 Victory Lane, Antwerp, OH 45813
 Phone: 419-399-3886
 Email: InnovativeAssemblySvc@outlook.com
 Family owned business located in Antwerp, Ohio looking for general labor associates to do light manufacturing and assembly. Will provide on the job training. Hours are Monday-Friday from 5:00 am-1:30 pm. Competitive wages, vacation and personal leave after probationary period.
To apply contact us via phone or email

HELP WANTED

The Hicksville Police Department is accepting applications or resumes for a Full Time Police Officer.

The applicant selected for the position must be able to work all shifts, holidays, and weekends as well as completing trainings as required.

The minimum qualifications for Position of Police Officer:

- Certified as a Police Officer in the State of Ohio
- Have a High School Diploma or GED
- 21 years of age
- Possess a Valid State of Ohio driver’s license
- Pass a Criminal Background check
- Clear physical and drug screen

The acceptable candidate will have the ability to:

- Maintain effective working relationships with other Village of Hicksville employees, representatives or other agencies and organizations and members of the community.
- Adhere to department professional and ethical standards of conduct.
- Communicate clearly and concisely, both verbally and in writing.
- Operate department issued equipment and gear, vehicles, standard office equipment, radios, computers, firearms, and any other specialized equipment

To apply for this position applicants will need to submit the following:

Applications can be picked up at the Hicksville Police Department. You can drop off or mail a Resume to the Hicksville Police Department.

Applicants will have till the end of the business day on April 30, 2026, to submit completed Application or Resume to the Hicksville Police Department, 510 W. High Street, Hicksville, Ohio 43526.

Questions about this position can be directed to Chief Mark Denning during normal business hours Monday through Friday.

THE VILLAGE OF HICKSVILLE IS AN E.O.E

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

VANTAGE CAREER CENTER INDUCTS TWO ALUMNI HALL OF FAME MEMBERS



Pictured left to right, Alumni Hall of Fame Inductees, Les Bowen and Marcia Osenga.

Van Wert, Ohio — Vantage Career Center proudly honored two exceptional alumni on Thursday, April 9, 2026, during its annual All Boards Dinner, inducting them into the Vantage Alumni Hall of Fame. The evening celebrated the achievements, dedication, and lasting impact of Les Bowen and Marcia Osenga.

Les Bowen, a 1982 graduate of the Building and In-

dustrial Maintenance program from Lincolnview Local Schools, has built a successful career as the owner and operator of Elite Mechanical & Plumbing and Elite Drone Services. Through his entrepreneurial leadership and dedication to the skilled trades, he exemplifies the real-world impact of hands-on training and technical expertise. He also gives back to the community

through his drone services, using his skills to support local needs.

Marcia Osenga, a 1979 graduate of the Early Childhood Education program from Van Wert High School, devoted more than 30 years to education, including an impressive 31-year career at Vantage Career Center. Throughout her time in the classroom, Osenga made a lasting difference in the lives of her students, helping them build confidence, earn industry credentials, and prepare for meaningful careers. Her passion for education and service continues to positively impact the community today.

During the ceremony, both inductees were presented with official commendations from the Ohio House of Representatives by Vantage alumnus, Hall of Fame member, and State Representative Roy Klopfenstein. Superintendent Rick Turner also presented each inductee with their official Vantage Alumni Hall of Fame plaques. The inductees were also recognized with remarks shared by Vantage Career Center Director, Ben Winans.

The Vantage Alumni Hall of Fame recognizes graduates who have demonstrated outstanding career success, leadership, and service, while reflecting the mission of Vantage Career Center—preparing students for both employment and continued education.

For more information about Vantage Career Center and its programs, visit www.vantagecareercenter.com.

\$11,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED AND YOUTH TOUR DELEGATES ANNOUNCED



Paulding Putnam is proud to recognize the outstanding students awarded scholarships this year. These scholarships honor the academic achievements and future aspirations of students whose families are Paulding Putnam members.

Children of Members Scholarship Winners

- Raeley Franklin, a senior at Antwerp High School, was awarded first place and a \$1,000 scholarship. She is the daughter of Brad and Lindsay Franklin and plans to attend the University of St. Francis, where she will major in nursing.

- Avery Ruhe, a senior at Miller City High School, earned second place and a \$700 scholarship. She is the daughter of Greg and Beth Ruhe. Avery plans to attend Bowling Green State University to major in health sciences.

- Clay Stoller, a senior at Wayne Trace High School, received third place and a \$500 scholarship. He is the son Reid and Amanda Stoller. Clay plans to attend Western Michigan

University where he will major in biological/biomedical science as a pre-dental pathway.

Ten additional students received honorable mention scholarships of \$350 each.

- Kyla Grime, a senior at Kalida High School and the daughter of Jamie and Beth Grime, plans to attend Wright State University and major in financial services.

- Madeline Liebrecht, a senior at Ottawa-Glandorf High School, and the daughter of Gregory and Christine Liebrecht, plans to attend the University of Findlay to major in physical therapy.

- Erica Sorg, a senior at Heritage High School, and the daughter of Roy and Jen Sorg, plans to attend Huntington University, where she will major in agribusiness with a dual focus in marketing and management.

- Aubrey Leopold, a senior at Ottawa-Glandorf High School and the daughter of Jim and Sue Leopold, plans to attend Bowling Green State University to double major in special education and primary education.

- Zach Hohlbein, a senior at Ottawa-Glandorf High School and Vantage Career Center is the son of Bob and Kim Hohlbein. He plans to attend Indiana Tech, where he will major in construction management.

- Maggie Minnich, a senior at Heritage High School, and the daughter of Chris and Kelly Minnich, plans to attend Huntington University, where she will major in animal science.

- Greta Liebrecht, a senior at Ottawa-Glandorf High School, and the daughter of Gregory and Christine

Liebrecht, plans to attend the University of Toledo to major in nursing.

- Savanna Niese, a senior at Miller City High School, and the daughter of Amber and Bradley Niese, plans to attend Rhodes State College and major in physical therapy assistant.

- Jackson Bidlack, a senior at Continental High School, is the son of Toby and Jessie Bidlack. He plans to attend Bowling Green State University and major in mechanical and manufacturing engineering.

- Sam Warnecke, a senior at Ottawa-Glandorf High School, and the son of Mark and Jenny Warnecke, plans to attend The Ohio State University to major in orthodontics.

Community Champion Scholarship Winners

The Community Champion Scholarship recognizes students who have made meaningful impacts in their local communities. This award was open to community-nominated students or applicants with a letter of recommendation.

- Trenton Manz, a senior at Paulding High School, has been awarded first place and a \$1,000 scholarship. He is the son of Will and Joanna Manz and plans to attend Defiance College and major in education.

- Zaine McMichael, a senior at Antwerp High School, earned second place and a \$500 scholarship. He is the son of Scott and Courtenay McMichael. Zaine plans to attend Wilmington College to major in agribusiness or education.

Continued in next edition.

Graduation Party Planning

Simplify your party planning with Ebel's Butcher Shop!

	¼# Sausage Patties	¼# Hamburger Patties	Pulled Pork	Smoked Brisket
50 People	\$46.00 (50 Patties)	\$87.00 (50 Patties)	\$97.00 (14#)	\$200.00 (14#)
100 people	\$90.00 (100 Patties)	\$170.00 (100 Patties)	\$192.00 (28#)	\$395.00 (28#)
150 people	\$135.00 (150 Patties)	\$255.00 (150 Patties)	\$285.00 (42#)	\$590.00 (42#)
200 people	\$175.00 (200 Patties)	\$340.00 (200 Patties)	\$375.00 (56#)	\$780.00 (56#)



HOURS

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- Buns: \$2.50/ Bag (8 Count)
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- Mac Salad: \$20.00/ 5# Container (25-30 Servings)
- Potato Salad: \$20.00/ 5# Container (25-30 Servings)
- Coleslaw: \$20.00/ 5# Container (25-30 Servings)
- Cookies: \$6.49/ Dozen (Chocolate Chip, Chocolate Crinkle, Monster, Peanut Butter, Snickerdoodle)
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PENCE PERSONAL PROPERTY AUCTION

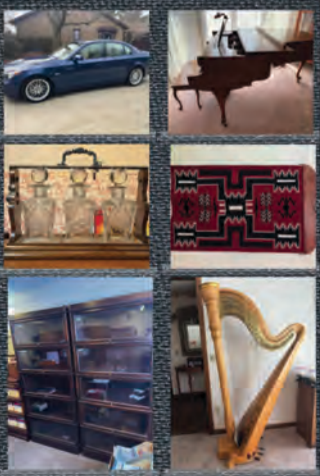
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