The West Bend News
www.westbendnews.net
VOLUME 22 – ISSUE 47 | Good News for Good Communities - Serving Northwest Ohio and Northeast Indiana | MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2026

PAULDING COUNTY HOSPITAL FOUNDATION PRESENTS $100,000 DONATION, HONORS BARGAIN BIN WITH LEGACY AWARD



Paulding County Hospital Foundation presented a Legacy Award to the Bargain Bin of Paulding County, Inc. At the 2026 PCHF Membership Luncheon on November 13, 2026.

The Paulding County Hospital Foundation celebrated a year of generosity and community support during its 2026 Membership Appreciation Lunch, highlighted by the presentation of a $100,000 donation to Paulding County Hospital and the recognition of the Bargain Bin of Paulding County, Inc. as the recipient of the Foundation's 2026 Legacy Award.

The annual gathering brought together Foundation members, donors, trustees and community partners to recognize the accomplishments made possible through their continued support of local healthcare.

One of the afternoon's highlights was the presentation of a $100,000 check to Paulding County Hospital to help complete the hospital's Therapy Department expansion and support the development of a new medical office in Payne.

The donation represents the success of a matching campaign launched at last year's appreciation luncheon, when the Foundation challenged the community to raise $30,000, with the Foundation pledging to match those contributions.

The campaign received an unexpected boost when the Paulding Eagles contributed $30,000. Additional major contributions included $15,000 from the Van Wert Area Foundation and $12,000 from the Paulding County Area Foundation, along with numerous donations from individuals, businesses and organizations throughout the community.

The combined generosity allowed the Foundation to exceed its original fundraising goal and make a significant investment in expanding access to healthcare services for Paulding County residents.

Another highlight of the luncheon was the presentation of the Foundation's prestigious Legacy Award to the Bargain Bin of Paulding County, Inc., recognizing more than seven decades of volunteerism, generosity and dedication to supporting Paulding County Hospital.

The Bargain Bin's history dates back to the 1953 polio epidemic, when a group of local women began organizing rummage sales to assist individuals receiving therapy. Their efforts eventually became dedicated to supporting the Therapy Department at

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Upcoming Holiday Schedule
Thanksgiving
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• Defiance office will be also be CLOSED Friday, Nov 27.
• Antwerp office will be OPEN ONLY for newspaper classified ad drop off on Friday, Nov 27 and will CLOSE AT 12PM.
Deadline for the November 30th edition will be WEDNESDAY, Nov 25
December
There will only be a newspaper on the the following MONDAYS:
Dec 7 | Dec 14 | Dec 21
Dec 21 will be our Christmas / New Years edition!
Let us know if you have a Christmas / New Years greeting ad you would like to place. Deadline is Thurs, Dec 17th.
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PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP AWARD 2026
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PAULDING COUNTY HOSPITAL RECOGNIZED WITH 2026 PERFORMANCE LEADERSHIP AWARD BY THE CHARTIS CENTER FOR RURAL HEALTH

As part of National Rural Health Day, Paulding County Hospital announced it has earned a 2026 Performance Leadership Award. Compiled by The Chartis Center for Rural Health, this award program recognizes the commitment and ability of rural hospitals to deliver quality care to their communities.

The Performance Leadership Award program is based on the results of the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®, and honors top-quartile performance (i.e., 75th percentile or above) among the nation's rural hospitals in Quality, Outcomes, or Patient Perspective.

Paulding County Hospital was excited to receive this award and is proud to continue to serve our communities, offering advancements in healthcare, close to home.

RIGHT LANE CLOSURES PLANNED FOR SHOULDER PAVING ON U.S. 24

The Indiana Department of Transportation announces lane closures on U.S. 24 for shoulder paving.

Starting on or after November 23, crews will pave the shoulders in both directions of U.S. 24 between I-469 and the Indiana/Ohio State Line. Work on the project is expected to last for approximately two weeks. All work is weather-dependent and schedules are subject to change.

(Continued on Page 3)

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Dooley Funeral Home	2
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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

November 23
- Author & Historian Dave Westrick @ St. John United Church of Christ, Defiance, 7p

November 26
- THANKSGIVING DAY! *West Bend Printing office closed*

November 27
- Christkindl Market opens, downtown Bryan, 4-8p (runs thru Dec. 19)

November 28
- Antwerp's Small Business Saturday - downtown, 9a-1p
- Jack Schilb in Concert @ Antwerp Distillery, 5:30p

November 30
- Antwerp's Christmas Lighting ceremony, Greenway Park (tennis courts), 6p

December 2
- PC PERI Dist 2 Meeting @ Paulding Library, 10a

December 1
- PC Retired Teachers Assoc. Holiday Brunch @ Paulding Pancake House, 10a

December 3
- Blood Drive @ First Church of Christ, Hicksville, 1-6p

December 5
- NH United Women of Faith Holiday Craft Bazaar @ NH UMC, 8a-2p
- Christmas at the Fort, The Old Fort FW, 10a-5p

WMYW 102.7 PAULDING COUNTY'S OWN

Add your event to the calendar info@westbendnews.net

Phone: 419-258-2000 • Email: info@westbendnews.net



PCHF presented Paulding County Hospital with a check for $100,000 made possible by a matching funds initiative.

(Continued from Page 1)

Paulding County Hospital.

Over the decades, the small volunteer operation grew into a significant community organization. Officially incorporated in 2010, the Bargain Bin eventually outgrew its original storefront and raised $262,000 to construct a new building, which opened in February 2017.

Today, more than 40 volunteers help operate the Bargain Bin, continuing its long-standing tradition of turning donated merchandise and volunteer hours into financial support for the hospital and community.

The organization's lifetime contributions have now surpassed an impressive $1 million, including more than $110,000 donated during 2026 as of September.

The Foundation recognized the Bargain Bin's extraordinary commitment to local healthcare, particularly its continued support of therapy services, as an example of the lasting impact community volunteers can make.

Beyond the major donation and Legacy Award presentation, the Foundation celebrated several additional accomplishments during 2026.

The organization awarded $5,000 in scholarships to local students pursuing healthcare careers, hosted a successful annual golf outing with 25 participating teams and welcomed several new Foundation members.

New memorial tributes were also added to the Foundation's Tree of Celebration, honoring David Dobbelaere, Mary Lou Colley and Cheryl Saylor.

Looking ahead to 2027, the Foundation announced that its fundraising efforts will focus on purchasing new training manikins for Paulding County Hospital's CPR and First Aid training programs. The equipment will help provide hands-on training for local first responders, strengthening their preparedness to respond to emergencies throughout the community.

The Foundation also recognized The Antwerp Exchange Bank as the sponsor of this year's luncheon. With locations throughout the region, including its new Paulding office, the bank continues to support organizations working to strengthen local communities.

The luncheon concluded with appreciation for the many donors, volunteers and community partners whose contributions continue to advance the Foundation's mission of supporting quality healthcare close to home.

GOLDEN RATIO WELLNESS DONATES $1,000 TO WOMEN'S GIVING CIRCLE



Pictured (L to R): Chris Yoder, Executive Director of the Defiance Area Foundation; Amy Coleman, BCHC; and RoseAnna Fitzenrider-Hollo, BCND, of Golden Ratio Wellness, LLC.

The Defiance Area Foundation recently received a $1,000 donation from Golden Ratio Wellness, LLC, to benefit its Women's Giving Circle Field of Interest Fund. Golden Ratio Wellness, an international consulting service provider based in Defiance, Ohio, specializes in women's health and hormone balance. The Women's Giving Circle brings together individuals who believe in the power of collective giving to make a positive difference in the community. Contributions to the fund help support its charitable efforts and strengthen opportunities for local impact.

The Defiance Area Foundation extends its appreciation to Golden Ratio Wellness for its generosity and commitment to giving back.

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INDUSTRIAL POWER SYSTEMS (IPS) ACQUIRES PAULDING INDUSTRIAL PARK

PAULDING — Industrial Power Systems (IPS), a family-owned industrial, general, and specialty contractor headquartered in Rossford, Ohio, has purchased the 53-acre Paulding Industrial Park from the Paulding Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). The Ohio Site Certified property was prepared through years of collaboration led by the CIC and Paulding County Economic Development (PCED), and now moves into private ownership with a clear goal: attracting the right development to strengthen Paulding County's economy.

IPS is now seeking a development partner whose plans fit both the site and the surrounding community. The company brings over 40 years of experience building industrial facilities across Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan to that search.

The Paulding Industrial Park was readied for development through a long-running partnership among the CIC, a private landowner, PCED, the Regional Growth Partnership, and the Ohio Department of Development.

Ohio Site Certification is a rigorous, state administered process that verifies a site is shovel ready for industrial investment. Certification confirms that all environmental reviews and due diligence studies are complete, zoning is appropriate and documented, utilities—including water, sewer, electric, natural gas, and broadband—are available or engineered, and the site carries no outstanding development barriers.

For a future user, that groundwork reduces risk and shortens timelines. It also positions Paulding County as a competitive, investment-ready location for new industry.

IPS's ownership pairs a certified site with a contractor that has spent four decades building the facilities industry runs on. IPS self-performs mechanical, electrical, piping, millwright, ironwork, fabrication, and general contracting work for clients in industrial, automotive, energy, steel, food and beverage, and commercial sectors.

IPS will evaluate prospective partners on how their plans serve the long-term interests of Paulding County, including future employment opportunities and private-sector growth in the region.

Paulding County Economic Development Director Tim Copsey, who advises the CIC Board, said: "This project has been years in development. The sale of the Industrial Park to IPS demonstrates the value of long-term planning, strong partnerships, and a shared commitment to building a stronger economic future for Paulding County."

"Paulding County did the hard work to make this site ready for industry, and we're grateful to the CIC and Paulding County Economic Development for the years of planning behind it," said Kevin J. Gray, founder and CEO of Industrial Power Systems. "IPS has been building in Northwest Ohio since 1985. Our job now is to find the right partner for this property, one that brings lasting investment and jobs to Paulding County and grows alongside the community."

The sale marks a key milestone in Paulding County's long-term economic strategy. It also extends the reach of a Northwest Ohio, family-owned company with deep roots in the region's industrial base.

About IPS

Founded in 1985 and headquartered in Rossford, Ohio, IPS — Industrial Power Systems — is a family-owned industrial, general, and specialty contractor delivering projects from concept to completion across the country. IPS self-performs mechanical, electrical, general trades, fabrication, sheet metal, 24/7 HVAC service, and virtual design & construction work, handling any size project with the same standard of Integrity, Performance, and Safety. Learn more at ipscontractor.com.

About Paulding CIC and Paulding County Economic Development

The Paulding Community Improvement Corporation is a nonprofit community development organization committed to advancing business growth, supporting local employers, and strengthening the long-term economic vitality of Paulding County. The CIC manages property development, facilitates strategic partnerships, and works closely with Paulding County Economic Development to attract new investment.

Paulding County Economic Development, Inc., led by Director Tim Copsey, works with local, public, and private leaders and the State of Ohio to retain and create jobs, improve local services, broaden the tax base, and encourage capital investment. Learn more at pced.net.

Scripture of the Week

"Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.
."

— Psalm 95:1-2

DEFIANCE AREA FOUNDATION AWARDS $5,000 GRANT TO SUPPORT IMAGINATION LIBRARY



Pictured with the grant are (L to R) Abby Wolfrum - United Way of Defiance County Executive Director and Chelsie Schroeder - Defiance Area Foundation Marketing Director.

The Defiance Area Foundation recently awarded a $5,000 grant to United Way of Defiance County in support of its Imagination Library program, helping put books into the hands of young children throughout the community.

The Imagination Library encourages early literacy by providing free, age-appropriate books delivered directly to children's homes each month from birth until their fifth birthday.

Locally, approximately 1,300 children benefit from the program. The Foundation's grant will help cover the cost of books and postage, ensuring families continue to receive these valuable resources at no cost. Through its community grantmaking, the Defiance Area Foundation is proud to support programs that invest in the next generation and create lasting opportunities for children and families throughout Defiance County.

WINTER APPLICATION OF MANURE RULES

As farmers start to finish up the harvest season, livestock farmers are looking to get manure applied before freezing soil and snow complications manure application. Winter manure application in Ohio is strongly discouraged due to high runoff and water quality risks, and specific rules apply depending on your region and farm size.

In the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB), surface application of manure is prohibited on frozen ground, and allowed on snow-covered ground only with immediate injection or incorporation within 24 hours. In the Grand Lake St. Mary's Watershed, a strict ban is in effect from December 15 to March 1st. After March 1st, injection or 24-hour incorporation is required if applied on frozen or snow-covered ground.

Special rules apply to permitted and large livestock farms. Generally prohibited from winter manure application except in rare, documented extreme emergencies. Farms producing or receiving over 350 tons or 100,000+ gallons a year must operate under a formal Nutrient Management Plan, which bans application between December 15 and March 1st. For smaller unpermitted livestock farms, inter application is legal under specific emergency or tight risk-management criteria, though discouraged.

In Ohio's winter manure application guidelines, frozen ground is generally defined as soil that you cannot inject manure into or cannot conduct tillage within 24 hours to incorporate the manure into the soil. Ohio's official rules do not provide a rigid statutory measurement for frozen ground, relying instead on a practical field-workability standard. Soil is not considered frozen if fertilizer or

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LOST AND FOUND

Penny For Your Thoughts
By: Nancy Whitaker

I have always been a little bit forgetful and I always seem to lose things. Among my accomplishments , I also can run into things, stumble and fall , plus I am not good with a knife.

There is a lot of things we can do that we might consider ourselves clumsy and I guess losing items might be under the term of "forgetful or maybe being careless "

A little while ago I heard a cat meowing. It cried and cried so I thought maybe my cat had got into something . Checked on my kitty and he was sleeping. Wasn't him. So, went outside and looked and sitting on the steps was a little black cat who was hungry. So I fed him, came back in and still heard a cat crying. Where was he?

Looked out the window up the alley and did not see a cat, but was still hearing a meow meow. Then I turned around and noticed my cell phone lying on the ottoman. Hmmm there was a video on the screen with a kitty cat on it. Oh no! The cat on the video was meowing really loud and I had looked for about half an hour for nothing!

I am not the only person who probably loses or forgets things. One day in the summer. I unlocked my door and came into the house. Wow! It was so dark, we must have lost power. Tried light switches and we had lights. So I wandered around the house trying to find a source of light.

Oh no. I will put my glasses on and I may be able to see where and why I don't have any electricity. Took glasses off and praise God I had lights! I had been wearing my sunglasses. Well I felt kinda funny, but was happy to get my lights .

Since I am now older, I try and be careful not to fall. But about 30 years ago, my family and I had went to a restaurant in Lima to eat. On our way out, I noticed the prettiest most delicious plate of homemade cinnamon rolls. A sign said $4 a piece. Well they would taste good for breakfast so I adjust for 4 rolls.

I handed the clerk $16 and she said. " That will be $32" Apparently the $4 sign was for some cupcakes. I was so aggravated and as I went to step out the doors I slipped and slid under the front part of a car. (those darn cinnamon rolls).



Maybe you are like me. I lose my glasses, purse, lipstick, cell phone, my Social Security Card, checkbook, you name it and maybe someday I will find things I have lost.

Right now I have a nice spatula missing and a pair of jogging pants. No idea where they are or where they might be. So do you ever forget things? Have you ever put your glasses on your head and couldn't find them? Or lose your cell phone? Or heard a strange cat meowing that was meowing in a video on your phone?

If you do things like I do, let me know and I'll give you a Penny For Your Thoughts. (maybe if I forget just remind me). Happy Thanksgiving everyone!!

---

manure can still be injected or immediately tilled/incorporated into the soil.

If the soil is too hard or frozen to allow immediate injection or tillage within 24 hours, application is restricted or prohibited depending on the specific farm type, location, and seasonal bans (such as in the Grand Lake St. Mary's watershed).

If winter application is legally necessary and permitted in your area, all of the following criteria must be met. First, Application rates for liquid manure is limited to maximum of 5,000 gallons/acre. For solid manure (>50% moisture) the maximum limit is of 10 wet tons/acre and for solid manure (<50% moisture) the maximum limit is 5 wet tons/acre.

Spreading manure on steep, highly erodible, or vulnerable land is discouraged and special rules apply. Liquid manure rates cannot exceed the lesser of 5,000 gallons per acre or the phosphorus (P) removal rate for the next crop (solid manure is typically capped around 10 wet tons/acre). Select fields with at least 90% crop residue or a living cover crop. Avoid sloped fields, areas subject to flooding, or land close to surface water, tile drains, gullies, or sinkholes. Do not apply manure if the top 2 inches of soil are saturated or if the 24-hour weather forecast calls for a >50% chance of rain exceeding 0.5 inches. Limit application to 20 contiguous acres or less.

Regarding surface cover, fields must have at least 90% surface residue cover (such as a living cover crop, established hay/pasture, or full corn/wheat residue left after harvest). Do not apply to more than 20 contiguous acres. Contiguous application blocks must be separated by a break of at least 200 feet. Setback Distances also apply. Minimum 200 feet from grassed waterways, surface drainage ditches, streams, surface inlets, and water bodies. Minimum 300 feet from wells, springs, and public surface drinking water intakes. Increase setbacks further if applied to highly sloping soil or local issues require it (nearby houses, schools, development, etc. In general, for field selection, choose low-sloping areas furthest from water transport routes, and avoid any land subject to flooding or ponding.

In summary, Ohio regulations limit the winter application of manure to protect water quality, focusing heavily on the Western Lake Erie Basin and the Grand Lake St Mary's watershed. Between December 15 and March 1, or anytime the ground is frozen or snow-covered, surface application of manure is generally prohibited unless specific emergency criteria are met. Contact Ohio Department of Agriculture or your local Soil & Water Conservation Service for emergency criteria.

Farmers must verify that fields are not frozen or snow-covered, and the weather forecast must not predict a 50% or greater chance of local precipitation exceeding a half-inch within 24 hours. If emergency application becomes necessary due to storage limitations, the manure must be injected directly into the ground or incorporated into the soil within 24 hours. Additionally, applications must maintain strict setbacks from waterways and utilize fields with active cover crops or substantial crop residue to minimize agricultural runoff, preventing harmful algal blooms in local watersheds.

More details and planning resources can be found through the Ohio Department of Agriculture Manure Application Guidelines and the OSU Extension Farm Office Blog.

—James J. Hoorman
Hoorman Soil Health Services



FIELD REPORTS FROM OHIO DIVISION OF WILDLIFE OFFICERS

Central Ohio – Wildlife District One

State Wildlife Officer Adam Smith, assigned to Logan County, spoke with a hunter about a recent white-tailed deer harvest. Officer Smith discovered that the individual had hunted several times throughout the fall without a permit. The hunter was issued a summons for taking a deer without a valid deer permit. The suspect paid $200 in fines and court costs.

State Wildlife Officer Antoinette Freet, assigned to Licking County, attended the Hartford Fair in August. Officer Freet provided fishing poles on behalf of the Ohio Division of Wildlife for youth and adults to use at the catch and release pond in the Natural Resource Area. The Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District held a youth fishing competition where prizes were awarded for the largest, smallest, and most fish caught. Children and adults enjoyed the experience, and some caught their very first fish.

Northwest Ohio – Wildlife District Two

In September, State Wildlife Officer Nolan Johnson, assigned to Van Wert County, checked waterfowl hunters at Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area in Lucas County. He contacted two duck hunters as they were ending the day's hunt. Officer Johnson discovered that both hunters had been using lead shot that morning. It is unlawful to hunt waterfowl with anything other than nontoxic shot. Officer Johnson issued each hunter a summons for the violation. The hunters paid court costs and fines totaling $149 each.

Northeast Ohio – Wildlife District Three

State Wildlife Officer Jason Warren, assigned to Lake Erie, patrolled the shipping docks in Ashtabula Harbor. In the spring, this harbor is a popular destination for smallmouth bass anglers. Officer Warren observed an angler catch a rock bass, unhook the fish, and throw it onto the bank where the fish would be unable to make it back into the water. Officer Warren confronted the subject, whose explanation for tossing the rock bass onto the bank was that the species eats young smallmouth bass. Officer Warren issued a citation into Ashtabula Municipal Court for disposing of fish upon the banks of Lake Erie. The defendant was found guilty and ordered to pay fines and costs in the amount of $180.

In September, State Wildlife Officer Evan Huegel, assigned to Ashland County, conducted an educational program for Ashland Christian School sixth-grade students at Camp Bethany in Holmes County. The program covered wildlife management, hunter and trapper education, and an introduction to archery. Officer Huegel discussed wildlife conservation, habitat management, and the importance of maintaining healthy wildlife populations in both urban and rural environments. Students also learned about safe and ethical hunting, trapping, and archery practices, including responsible outdoor recreation and stewardship of Ohio's natural resources. The program promoted wildlife conservation, outdoor safety, and an appreciation for Ohio's wildlife and outdoor traditions.

Southeast Ohio – Wildlife District Four

State Wildlife Officer Jerrod Allison, assigned to Coshocton County, encountered two people fishing in Wills Creek and discovered neither of them had a current fishing license. They were each issued a summons for fishing without a license. The individuals were found guilty in Coshocton Municipal Court and were ordered to pay $160 each in fines and court costs.

State Wildlife Officer Kiri Williams, assigned to Vinton County, was on routine patrol when she encountered an individual who had cut an artery on an arm while riding a side-by-side vehicle. Officer Williams provided first aid until EMS arrived and transported the subject to the hospital.

Southwest Ohio – Wildlife District Five

Wildlife officers in District Five helped with recent ring-necked pheasant hunting events. State Wildlife Officer Alex Almeter, assigned to Greene County, State Wildlife Officer Isaiah Gifford, assigned to Clinton County, and Wildlife Officer Supervisor David Warner assisted the Greene County Fish and Game Association with their annual Rooster Run youth pheasant hunting event. Youth are paired with guides and dogs for an exciting day afield. Additionally, State Wildlife Officer Micah Collier, assigned to Brown County, and Wildlife Officer Supervisor David Warner attended and assisted with the Brown/Adams County Chapter of Quail Forever's annual youth pheasant hunt.

The deadline for the West Bend News is THURSDAYS at 5pm for the following issue.
Send your news, ads, and classifieds to info@westbendnews.net
Call 419-258-2000 for information or printing quotes.

STATE LEADERS CELEBRATE NEW TRAIL AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION AT OHIO RIVER WAY SUMMIT

The Ohio River is now officially recognized as the state's 18th Ohio Water Trail. Today, at the Ohio River Way summit, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) presented the Ohio River Community with the designation, which establishes the state's longest water trail at 167 miles.

At the summit, ODNR Director Mary Mertz presented the official proclamation recognizing the Ohio River as Ohio's 18th water trail. This achievement follows the National Park Service's 2025 designation of the Ohio River Way as a 308-mile National Water Trail that runs along the borders of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana.

"This official designation of the Ohio River is recognition of the communities, partnerships, and people who have committed countless hours, ideas, and energy into elevating one of our region's greatest natural resources," said ODNR Director Mary Mertz. "This designation sends a clear message that Ohio is committed to honoring its natural resources and expanding access to outdoor experiences for everyone."

The newly designated state water trail covers a significant portion of the river but does not include the entire Ohio border. It begins at Ice Creek in Coal Grove and continues to Cincinnati's Shawnee Outlook Park, where it meets the Great Miami River, another state-designated water trail.

"This designation sends a clear message that Ohio is committed to honoring its natural resources and expanding access to outdoor experiences for everyone."

ODNR Director Mary Mertz

ODNR's water trail program is designed to expand awareness of public paddling access while improving safety on Ohio's waterways. Each designation relies on strong community leadership, a shared commitment to safe recreation, and clear, accessible guides that help paddlers find points of access, understand local hazards, and discover nearby places of interest.

Ohio Water Trail designations are one part of a greater mission to improve water quality across the state. With support from Governor Mike DeWine's H2Ohio initiative and grants benefiting Appalachian communities, Ohio continues to make measurable progress in restoring and protecting its waterways.

Ohio River Way has played an important role in strengthening regional partnerships and promoting the river as a corridor of culture, history, pride, and opportunity. The organization's annual summit brings together community leaders, business partners, and conservation and recreation enthusiasts who share a commitment to the river's future.

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.

(Continued from Page 1)

During paving, the right lane in both directions of U.S. 24 will be closed.

INDOT encourages drivers to consider safety for all by slowing down, using extra caution and driving distraction-free when traveling in and around all work zones.

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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PAULDING COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM HOSTS MEET THE AUTHORS NIGHT



The Paulding County History Museum welcomed local authors and literature enthusiasts on Tuesday, November 17, 2026, for a Meet the Authors Night. The event, held at 6:30 p.m., was hosted by the museum's Festival of Trees and sponsored by the Paulding Writers' Group.

The evening provided an opportunity for visitors to meet area writers, discover their published works and learn more about the stories, experiences and inspiration behind their books.

A diverse group of authors participated, representing a wide variety of genres, including local history, poetry, fiction, memoirs, inspirational writing and children's literature.

Among the featured authors was **Victor Bennett** (who was absent from the event due to illness), whose book *Redistribution of Happiness* offers poems exploring faith, family and hope. **Duane Bailey** presented his works, including *The Rings of Saturn* and *Beyond the Rings of Saturn*, while **Amber Kynock** shared her contributions to a historical book of her family's *Lilacs in Miami*.

Other participating writers included **Caroline Arend**, author of *Grandpa Doesn't Like Snakes*; **Kylee Baumle**, whose works include *Indoor Plant Decor: The Design Stylebook for Houseplants* and *The Monarch, Saving our Most-Loved Butterfly*; and **Beth Ann Baus**, author of *Sister Sunday*, *My So Much More* and *His Power, Our Weakness: Encouragement for the Biblical Counselor*.

Mark W. Holtsberry shared his Civil War research and publications focusing on Paulding County veterans: *Civil War Veterans Buried in Paulding County*, *Paulding County in the Splendid Little War*, and *Paulding County in the Great War*, while **Jenna Kipfer** presented *The Tale of the Corns: The Becoming*. **Eva Sharron Kobee** was featured with *Back to French Lick*, and **Melinda Krick** shared her *Historical Hand-Atlas 1882 Illustrated and History of Paulding County Ohio* publication documenting Paulding County.

The event also featured **Jane Nice**, author of *Married to Millie: The Humble Life of Herb Monroe*, and **Susan Paulus**, whose works include *Come Walk with Me* and *Forever Love: A Poet's Journey from Sometimes to Always to Forever, Encounter Jesus: Encounty Compassion, Encounter Love*, and *Encountering Jesus Today*.

Additional participating authors included **Rich Phelan** (*Edge of Darkness and Bringer of Darkness*), **Carol Razo** (*From the River's Edge: 200 Years in Crane Township*), **Predest (Dwayne) Richardson** (*Now Listen to This*; *Now Listen to This Too*), **Tonalee Shinaberry-King** (*More Than a Mushroom Hunt*; *Cautionary Tale of a Tattletail*), **Adam Snyder** (*If You Want to Keep Same Chickens* ; *Pie Takes Time*), **Kim Sutton** (*Letters from the Civil War: Paulding County Ohio, 14th Ohio Volunteer Infantry*; **Nichole Suvar** (*Prepare Him Room: An Intentional Advent Devotional*, and others), **Joel Steiner** (*The Chronicles of the Good King of Capurnica: The Awakening of Estaeri*) and **Elecia Wobler** (*Healing and Holding On: Finding God in Grief and Grace, a 30-Day Devotional*). Their publications covered subjects ranging from personal experiences and family histories to military service, spirituality, fiction and poetry.

The evening also highlighted the Paulding Writers' Group, an organization that began in 2018 with five or six members meeting monthly in the Fellowship Hall of the First Presbyterian Church. Members initially shared their writing for review and comment before eventually moving their meetings to the home of Susan Paulus.

Over the years, the group has expanded its activities and membership, welcoming writers ranging in age from 16 to 88. Members have written poetry, humor, personal essays, memoirs, fiction and other works. Collectively, the group has published 11 books.

In 2024, the Paulding Writers' Group hosted its first annual writers' conference at the historic Paulding County Carnegie Library. Building on that success, the group expanded the gathering into an annual event featuring speakers, panel discussions, workshops and opportunities for writers to connect.

The group's mission is to "encourage, inspire, write," providing a supportive environment for both experienced and aspiring authors.

Meet the Authors Night offered an opportunity to celebrate the literary talents found throughout Paulding County and surrounding communities while encouraging residents to discover and support local writers.

THE SEASON OF JOY



As we enter this Thanksgiving and Advent season, let us thank God for allowing us to see another season. Because of God's grace and mercy, we have been given another day and another season. May each day be sweeter than the last. This is a wonderful sentiment to carry into the day. Let us not repeat yesterday's mistakes.

Let us not forget to express the love today that we were too ashamed to yesterday. Let us go boldly to the throne of grace today, asking Jesus for forgiveness of our sins and giving God His due praise. Let us find the Joy of Christ and hold on to it, season after season, never letting it go. Let Jesus Christ be the center of our Joy. For us, Thanksgiving is more than sharing food between the Indians and the settlers, and our yearly imitation of this through the partaking of turkeys, hams, cranberry sauce, etc., as well as Christmas shopping and the lights and gifts and toys. This entire season is rooted in the sharing of God's love through the giving of His Son, Jesus Christ, as a Sacrificial Lamb to wash away our sins. This is paramount. As we approach Advent, let us keep in our hearts that one day Jesus will return for his people, and this is the reason for our Joy. May God bless you and keep you in perfect peace this season.

Peace and Love,

—Pastor Dwayne

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

Questions

Kindergartener: "Did God have any kids?"

Student: "Where do God and the angels sleep?"

2nd Grader: "How do we know God's name is God?"

3rd Grader: "Did Jesus have a last name?"

Bible :

Teacher: "What is a blessing?" Kindergartener: "Praying for other people."

1st Grader: "The Old Testament for too big, so we had to start over."

Teacher: "What did Eve do in the Garden?" 1st Grader 1: "She disobeyed God." Teacher: "Who's fault was it that Eve sinned?" 1st Grader 2: "Eve's"

Teacher: "Noah lived to be 950 years old." Student 1: "WOW! That's almost infinity" Student 2: "That's older than my dad!"

Teacher: "What is the gospel?" 2nd Grader: "When you gather everyone you can in a room and tell them about Jesus!"

Teacher: "What did Solomon do that was not wise?" 2nd Grader: Married other women and turned to idols."

Teacher: "Who made God? 2nd Grader 1: "Nobody" 2nd Grader 2: "But I don't understand" 2nd Grader 3: "That's confusing" 2nd Grader 4: "It will all make sense when we get to Heaven."

Teacher: "How does God feel about lying?" 3rd Grader: "He does not like it!"

Teacher: "The gift of God is what?" 3rd Grader: "Eternal life"

Teacher: "What is baptism?" 4th Grader: "Dunking in the water and praying to God."

5th Grader: "God's presence is so hot it can burn up a bush?"

Teacher: "What is Heaven going to be like?" Student: "Like cloud sand in Heaven to play with all the time."

Student: "I think Issac needed glasses"

NEW HAVEN UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH TO HOST ANNUAL HOLIDAY CRAFT BAZAAR

The New Haven United Women of Faith will be holding their annual Holiday Craft Bazaar on Saturday, December 5th from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the New Haven United Methodist Church, 630 Lincoln Hwy East, New Haven, IN.

Featuring over 30 tables of unique handcrafted items and a Country Kitchen filled with pies, cakes, cookies and assorted baked goodies. Both breakfast and lunch will be served.

All proceeds will support the missions works of the United Women in Faith, both globally and locally.

EDGERTON MAYOR VISITS PAULDING COUNTY MAYORS ASSOCIATION; HEARS FROM GRANT WRITING AND PPEC BROADBAND PARTNERS

The Paulding County Mayors Association gathered this week for its quarterly meeting, bringing together local leaders from across the county to discuss opportunities, challenges, and initiatives impacting their communities. Eight of Paulding County's eleven village mayors were in attendance and were joined by special guest Mayor Bob Day of Edgerton, Ohio, from nearby Williams County.

The meeting featured presentations from Renee Smith and Sarah Stephens Krupp of Thrive Community Partners, who provided information on grant research services and funding opportunities available to local governments and community organizations. The discussion focused on introductions to the business and how collaboration may lead to future funding opportunities to pursue projects that improve quality of life, infrastructure, and economic vitality.

Mayors were also introduced to several members of the leadership team from Paulding Putnam Electric Cooperative, including incoming Chief Executive Officer Nick Eltzroth, Broadband Services Coordinator Luke Burkart, and Vice President of Strategic Engagement & External Affairs Erika Willitzer. Cooperative representatives shared updates on broadband initiatives already in place in the communities of Grover Hill, Scott, Haviland and Payne and shared the plan for continued expansion of high-speed internet services throughout the region.

Following the presentations, mayors participated in roundtable discussions covering a variety of topics affecting their communities. The exchange provided an opportunity for local leaders to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore potential collaborative solutions to issues facing small communities.

Paulding County Economic Development Director Tim Copsey provided an update on current Paulding County Land Bank projects and discussed the outlook for state funding opportunities in 2027. The Land Bank program continues to serve as an important tool for addressing blighted properties and supporting redevelopment efforts throughout the county.

The meeting concluded with attendees receiving a recently completed inventory documenting all 112 projects undertaken throughout Paulding County since the establishment of the Paulding County Land Bank in 2018. The report highlights the significant progress made through partnerships between local governments, community organizations, and property owners to improve neighborhoods and strengthen communities across the county.

"The quarterly mayors meetings continue to provide a valuable forum for collaboration, communication, and a venue for local leaders to learn and reenergize. It helps them understand they are not alone in a silo," said Copsey. "By bringing communities together and connecting them with organizations that support their work we continue to build stronger communities throughout Paulding County and now the region with Mayor Day joining us from Williams County."

For additional information regarding the Paulding County Mayors Association or the Paulding County Land Bank, contact the Paulding County Economic Development Office.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE SCHEDULED IN HICKSVILLE

The American Red Cross will host a community blood drive on Thursday, December 3, from 1:00-6:00 p.m. at the First Church of Christ in Hicksville.

Community members are encouraged to donate blood to help ensure a stable supply for patients in need. Blood donations are used every day to treat accident victims, surgical patients, individuals battling cancer, and those with chronic illnesses.

Appointments are encouraged to help minimize wait times. To schedule a donation, call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

The First Church of Christ is located in Hicksville, and all eligible donors are invited to participate. One blood donation can help save multiple lives, making each donor's contribution an important part of meeting the ongoing need for blood throughout the region.

The need for blood is constant and only volunteer donors can fulfill that need for patients in our community. Nationwide, someone needs a unit of blood every 2 to 3 seconds and most of us will need blood in our lifetime.

Thank you for supporting the American Red Cross blood program!

Download the Red Cross Blood Donor App on the App Store, Google Play or text BLOODAPP to 90999. Schedule appointments, view your blood type and results of your mini-physical, and track your donations.

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* Free Admission!
* Lunch Available!
* Variety of crafters and vendors – over 65!
Sponsored by the Fairview Athletic Boosters
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THANKSGIVING MEMORIES

Suddenly I'm hungry for some tater soup. Where do you get that Pioneer country gravy? I'm going to have to reread the book "Stevie." Wish I could have known him.

In the good old days, when I was a lad, both of our families would have a Thanksgiving get together the Sunday before or the Sunday after. There is one of those meetings that stick in my memory. A favorite uncle that visited us frequently on the farm was a prosperous businessman in Fort Wayne.

This Uncle lived in a new subdivision on the edge of Fort Wayne. He had a large new ranch house with a full basement. The meeting was held in the basement and I can remember being there like it was yesterday. My aunt always made a dessert of crushed pineapple and whipped cream

I can still taste that dessert.

On Thanksgiving day our church had an all day meeting. A 10 o'clock service, huge potluck at noon and an afternoon service. After the afternoon service there was another potluck, some of the leftovers from noon, then an evening service. We never stayed for the evening meal because we had to hurry home to do chores. One time my folks let me stay for the evening meal and I remember the room that we boys goofed around in. I remember I had a brand new coat, the latest style all the boys wore. It was a bomber jacket with a fur collar. I can just feel that coat.

I remember one of those meetings that was held at our church. We boys were sitting in the balcony and the church was packed. Midway through the meeting the lights went off and stayed off for several minutes, then came on and went out again. The preacher just kept right on preaching. My cousin had a date and we kidded him about what was happening when the lights went out.

All of this pales when I remember the Thanksgiving program in grade school. We had a little play for our folks and it was always the pilgrims and the Indians having a meal together. It was always the same theme but somehow always different. We were proud as can be to put on our own play.

As you get older the holidays don't seem to have the magic that they used to. We don't get to get out of school.

Each day is pretty much the same. This Thanksgiving let's try to reclaim some of the magic that we had in days gone by.

—James Neuhouser

READER PICK-UP LOCATIONS

OHIO LOCATIONS

Antwerp: Antwerp Library, Antwerp Exchange Bank, Antwerp Manor, Dollar General, Family Dollar, G-Mart, Genesis House, H20 Water Store, H&W NAPA, 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: Advanced Auto, Chief, Defiance Public Library, Dollar General (Clinton St), Marathon Main Stop, Newman's Marathon Carryout, Senior Center, Smoke Stop … **Junction** Dollar General, Cabbage Patch

Edgerton: USPS, H&W Napa, Kaiser Supermarket, Utilties Dept, Marathon Main Stop, Marathon (East)

Grover Hill: N&N Quick Stop, GH Branch Library, Dollar General

Hicksville: Barber Shop Ministries, Citgo, Dollar General, Johnson Memorial Library, Marathon, McDonalds, Red Angel Pizza, Sailers, Senior Center, Shell Station, Vancrest, Village offices

Ney: Marathon

Oakwood: Cooper Comm. Library, Dollar General, Landing Strip, Oakwood Market, Oakleaf Diner

Paulding: Ace Hardware, Bargain Bin, Board of Elections, Chief, Corner Market, Courthouse, Dairy Queen, Dollar General, Gardens of Paulding, Holly, Wood & Vine, Integrity Ford, Kwik Mart, Maramart, Napa Do It Best, PC Sheriff 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 General, Harlan Cafe, Antwerp Exchange 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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OAKWOOD MAYOR SEEKS REMOVAL OF FIRE CHIEF

Oakwood Mayor Joshua Duslak has filed formal charges seeking the removal of Oakwood Volunteer Fire Chief James Varner, citing allegations of misconduct in office, nonfeasance, misfeasance, malfeasance and gross neglect of duty.

The charges, dated October 19, 2026, outline several alleged violations, including failure to follow executive directives, unauthorized firefighter onboarding, improper handling of personnel disciplinary matters and failure to maintain clear separation between the Village Fire Department and the Oakwood Fire Department Association.

The dispute stems partly from disciplinary charges Varner brought against two firefighters in June 2026. Following an investigation, Duslak rescinded those charges in July, finding the allegations unsubstantiated. Varner subsequently challenged the mayor's authority regarding firefighter protective equipment and departmental operations.

The mayor also alleges that Varner failed to submit required fire incident reports to the Ohio State Fire Marshal for May through August 2026. State officials confirmed missing reports for May and June, warning that continued noncompliance could jeopardize grant funding and result in administrative action.

Duslak issued executive directives in July and September establishing reporting requirements, personnel procedures and administrative oversight. The mayor alleges Varner failed to comply with several of those directives.

A hearing was scheduled before Oakwood Village Council for November 16, 2026, to consider the charges and possible removal. Under Ohio law, removal requires approval by two-thirds of all elected council members. The meeting has been postponed at the behest of the legal counsel for the defendant.

OHSAA RECEIVES COMPLETED PETITION TO FORCE REFERENDUM VOTE

The Ohio High School Athletic Association has received a completed petition that will force a referendum vote of OHSAA member schools next May that, if passed, would separate public and non-public schools into separate divisions for postseason tournaments. Several public schools from the Suburban League in Northeast Ohio submitted the proposal and have obtained the required number of signatures from member school principals.

There are currently 813 member high schools within the OHSAA, including 691 public and 121 non-public. The annual referendum voting period is May 1-15. Each member high school principal casts one vote on each issue on behalf of the school, with a simple majority needed to pass a referendum item.

Currently eight states have some form of separate tournaments for public and private schools. In Ohio, the first referendum to separate public and non-public school tournaments was in 1978, which was defeated by a wide margin (83.9% to 16.1%). A second referendum to force separation was defeated in 1993 (66.8% to 33.2%).

If the proposal passes in May, it would take effect with the 2028-29 school year. The OHSAA Board of Directors would determine how many divisions for public schools and private schools in each sport. In addition, the competitive balance process would be eliminated, thus removing any adjustments to public schools that have open enrollment.

The OHSAA plans to conduct a series of meetings with member schools in early 2027 to discuss the proposal.

In 2014, OHSAA member schools voted in favor of a competitive balance proposal that collects varsity roster data and makes modifications to how schools are placed into tournament divisions in the team sports of soccer, girls volleyball, football, girls and boys basketball, softball and baseball. The 2017-18 school year was the first that used competitive balance data to modify base enrollment numbers.

In the sports that utilize competitive balance data, from the fall of 2017 through the spring state tournaments of 2026, the number of state championships won by public and non-public schools include:

From the 2001-02 school year through the 2016-17 school year, public schools won 56 percent of the state championships in the competitive balance sports, while private schools won 44 percent. Since competitive balance went into effect, public schools have won 66 percent of the state titles, while private schools have won 34 percent.

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CHP'S PAULDING BEACON OF HOPE A SUCCESS FOR LOCAL HOSPICE PATIENTS



The family of Tomi Meyer enjoyed an evening of celebrating family and the professional care of CHP.

The Paulding County community once again showed its generosity and support during CHP Home Care & Hospice's annual Beacon of Hope Dinner & Charity Auction on November 12.

The evening brought together families, friends, and community supporters for a meaningful night dedicated to local hospice care. Through the generosity of sponsors, donors, and attendees, $29,328 was raised for CHP's Hospice Patient Care Fund. These funds stay in Paulding County, helping ensure patients receive compassionate end-of-life care regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay.

CHP awarded Paulding County Hospital and Custom Assembly 'Friend of Hospice' awards for their consistent monetary and attendance support for hospice care. CHP extends its sincere appreciation to the families who shared their hospice experiences, emcee Joe Barker, auctioneer Kenny Thomas, and the many businesses, volunteers, and staff who helped make the event possible.

Every Life Deserves Dignity, and CHP is grateful for a community that continues to make that mission possible.

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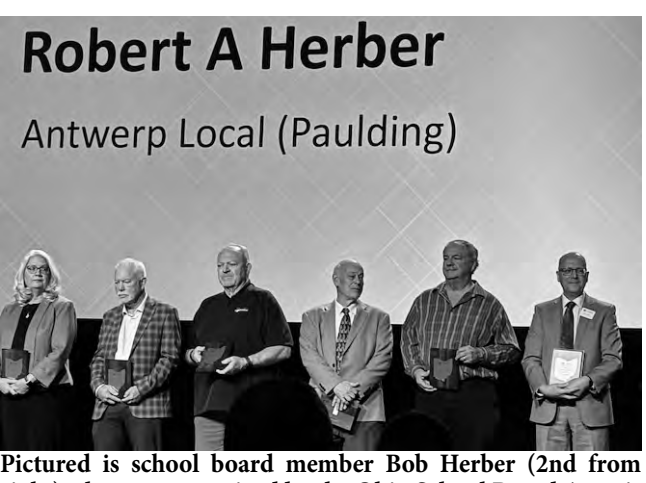
ANTWERP LOCAL SCHOOLS RECOGNIZES DURBIN & BOARD MEMBER HERBER AT RECENT BOARD MEETING



Pictured here is Antwerp Local School's Superintendent, Dr. Martin Miller with senior Cross Country runner Reese Durbin, and Cross Country Coach Cord Ehrhart.



Pictured is school board member Bob Herber (2nd from right) who was recognized by the Ohio School Board Association for 25 years of service as a school board member.

The Antwerp Board of Education met Thursday, November 19, 2026 at 5:30 p.m. in the BOE Room

The meeting began with the introduction of guest. Cross Country State meet participant Reese Durbin and parents along with Cross Country Coach Cord Ehrhart.

Treasurer Kristine Stuart presented her monthly financial and fiscal year.

MS/HS Principal Jessie Arnold reported that we are half way through the 2nd grading period. Highlights of recent events include Mock Interviews that took place for students in the College and Careers Readiness course and students are finalizing their course selections for the second semester. Ms. Arnold also noted that she is working with guidance counselor Mrs. Hammer on courses and daily schedules for the following school year. Ms. Arnold also shared that our winter sport teams are ready to go with their season schedules and band and choir concerts will take place in mid-December.

Elementary Principal Doug Billman shared with the Board the October Students of the Month:

Kindergarten: Kinslee Harvey, Henry Kemerer, Vivienne Riley

1st Grade: Gemma Bermejo, Sawyer Hamrick, Colton Denning

2nd Grade: Jaxon Feehan, Theo Koenn

3rd Grade: Davion Owens, Anderson Foust, Clair Bechstein

4th Grade: Thatcher Friend, Duke Wiesehan, Elise Graham

5th Grade: Payton Heine, Nash Zartman

Mr. Billman also shared with the Board upcoming events including our 5th grade trip to a Junior Achievement event in Lima Dec. 4th and the 2nd and 3rd grade Christmas Concert Dec. 7th a 7:00 p.m. Mr. Billman thanked school staff for their efforts with our recent Veteran's Day Assembly honoring our veterans and those currently serving in the military. Mr. Billman also thanked the elementary PTO for their preparation of the upcoming bowling party event.

Dr. Miller introduced to the Board Cross Country Runner senior Reese Durbin and presented Reese with a certificate and pen acknowledging her for her recent participation at the State of Ohio Cross Country meet. Reese holds the school record for the fastest female time in the 3.1-mile event. Dr. Miller also recognized Cross Country Coach Cord Ehrhart for his 26-year service as the Country Coach and the tremendous number of successful JH and HS programs over the 26 year period. Dr. Miller also took time to recognize school board member Bob Herber who was recently recognized by the Ohio School Board Association for his 25-year service as a board member.

Dr. Miller and the Board discussed the positive reviews with the look and functionality of the new bus garage facility. Dr. Miller shared that efforts are underway for Ohio Gas to install the gas line and get the building heated and ready to house the bus fleet. Dr. Miller also shared that there will be a 2-hour delay in-service Dec. 2nd. During the in-service, staff members will complete training on the districts cardiac emergency response plan resulting in the district earning a Project Adam Heart Safe School designation.

Dr. Miller also noted recent donations and grants from organizations and individuals to the Antwerp Athletic Booster organization weight room equipment fundraiser. The donations including $5000 from the Antwerp Community Development Corporation, a $1000 donation from the Paulding Putnam Operation Round Up, a $3150 grant from the Education Purchasing Council, and a $1000 donation from former Antwerp graduate Brock Bell. Dr. Miller thanked Booster President Ashley Fidler for her efforts toward the project.

Dr. Miller also shared with the Board that the administration is working on the calendar for the 2027-2028 school year with the Antwerp Education Association and will have a final version for the board to approve at the December Board meeting.

Dr. Miller also shared with the Board that he will attend the Finalsite Superintendent Collaborative Summit in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida December 2 – 4, 2026 and the District Administration Leadership Institute December 16 – 18, 2026 in Pasadena, California.

Consent Items: All items were approved.

The December Board of Education meeting will take place Thursday, December 10th at 5:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Room.

ANTWERP VFW POST 5087 DONATES $5,000 TO PAULDING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



Antwerp VFW Post 5087 recently donated $5,000 to the Paulding County Sheriff's Office to support training for K-9 Bo.

The generous contribution will help provide training for Bo, supporting the Sheriff's Office in law enforcement efforts in Paulding County.

The donation reflects the VFW's continued commitment to supporting local law enforcement and giving back to the community.

PAULDING COUNTY PROBATE COURT MARRIAGE APPLICATION REPORTS

Nicholas Allen Fleming (22), Payne, OH, Welder; Mackenzie Marie Blankenship (22), Payne, OH; Medical coder/Bartender

Drake Rudolph Wenninger (22), Defiance, OH, Production assembler; Rachel Clara Stoller (23), Haviland, OH, Student

PAULDING COUNTY COURT RECORDS

Criminal/Traffic Disposition Report

Alexis Bonjour, Huntertown, Indiana, pleaded guilty to driving while texting. Bonjour was fined $150 and ordered to pay $100 in court costs.

Matthew D. Straley, Paulding, pleaded guilty to a traffic control device/sign violation. Straley was fined $55 and ordered to pay $100 in court costs.

Gail L. Langham, Hicksville, pleaded guilty to a stop sign violation. Langham was fined $55 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

Troy A. Womack, Antwerp, pleaded guilty to driving while texting. Womack was fined $150 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

Anthony V. Cosentino, Defiance, pleaded guilty to a traffic control device/sign violation. Cosentino was fined $55 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

Mark J. Burken, Napoleon, pleaded guilty to improper passing. Burken was fined $55 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

Kevin L. Clay, Defiance, had a charge of child endangering dismissed with prejudice at the state's request. Court costs were waived.

Nolan T. Kunkleman, Delphos, had a charge of criminal mischief dismissed with prejudice at the state's request. Court costs were waived.

Gregory C. Fluttrow, Continental, pleaded no contest and was found guilty of two counts of misuse of 911. Fluttrow was fined $100 on each count, totaling $200, and ordered to pay $128 in court costs. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail on each count, with all 60 days suspended. The jail sentences were ordered to run consecutively. Fluttrow was also ordered to refrain from alcohol and drugs, call 911 only in an emergency and remain compliant with his prescribed medications.

Kyle J. Arn, Van Wert, pleaded no contest to an unsafe vehicle violation. Arn was fined $70, all of which was suspended, and ordered to pay $97 in court costs.

Carolina Lopez Mendoza, Haviland, pleaded guilty to a child restraint violation. Lopez Mendoza was fined $70 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

David R. Brown, Paulding, pleaded guilty to a seat belt violation. Brown was fined $30 and ordered to pay $57 in court costs.

Chad L. Parker, Defiance, pleaded guilty to a traffic control device/sign violation. Parker was fined $55 and ordered to pay $95 in court costs.

LOCAL POSTAL CLERK LAUNCHES STORYCOLORSTUDIO, TURNING FAMILY PHOTOS INTO PERSONALIZED COLORING BOOKS

A local man has launched StoryColorStudio, an online business that turns a single photo into a personalized coloring book starring a child, a grandparent, a friend or the customer.

"My wife inspired the idea," said Paul Miller, founder of StoryColorStudio. "She loves to color and saw the amazing things AI can do with art. I spent my spare time building the app from scratch."

At storycolorstudio.com, customers upload one photo, choose an art style (anime, cartoon or fantasy) and pick a story or type their own idea. In a few minutes, the site draws a 14-page book: a cover, 12 story pages and a back cover, all featuring the person in the photo. Customers preview every page free before deciding whether to buy.

Miller works as a clerk at the Edgerton post office and is a former local news journalist.

"Other coloring books portray someone else," Miller said. "This one is about the people you care about. When a child opens it and sees themselves on the first page, the excitement is priceless."

Books come in three detail levels: Simple for young children, Detailed for teens and Advanced for adults who enjoy intricate pages.

"It's a great gift for adult colorers – they are the stars in detailed, complex story settings," Miller said.

Every page is checked automatically for quality and family-friendly content before the customer sees it. Photos are used only to draw the book, and each photo is deleted as soon as the book is made.

"Family and friends tested it this month, and their reactions told me it was ready for the holidays," Miller said. "It makes a gift nobody else can give."

Books are printed and shipped by Lulu, a print-on-demand company.

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CHRISTKINDL MARKET OF BRYAN OPENS FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27



The Christkindl Market of Bryan is set to open for the 2026 season on Friday, November 27, running Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 4-8 p.m. through December 19. It is located on the square in downtown Bryan, Ohio, and includes a European-style outdoor market, hot food and beverage options, visits with Santa, horse-drawn wagon rides and nightly entertainment.

This year's market features vendor chalets with products ranging from baked goods to specialty Christmas décor items and toys imported from Europe. The market also includes St. Nick's Snak Haus, food and beverage chalet that serves hot cocoa, coffee and German treats.

"The market offers a chance to make great memories with family and friends, and many have made this event their new holiday tradition. Bryan really shines during the holidays. There is a lot to see and do with many free activities," said Ann Spangler of the Christkindl Market of Bryan committee. "We welcome all to come out and enjoy the atmosphere, have a hot cocoa, browse the vendor selections, listen to music, and get in the Christmas spirit."

Each night of the market, guests can enjoy free activities and entertainment. Some of this year's highlights include German music and dancers on various evenings; an ice sculpture demo on December 4; and the Ohio Alphorns on December 5. The Bryan Area Foundation's Festival of Trees will also be held on various nights inside the Williams County Courthouse. The complete schedule of entertainment and activities can be found at bryandevelopment.org/market.

Created in 2021, the Christkindl Market of Bryan is a beloved community tradition under the beautiful lights of the courthouse square. There is no admission fee, parking is free, and many businesses around the square offer specials and extended hours on market nights to enhance the visitor experience.

The Christkindl Market of Bryan is a project of Bryan Development, which focuses on economic activity, preservation and growth. This nonprofit event is made possible through the generous support of corporate and individual sponsors, including the 2026 presenting sponsor, Bryan Area Foundation.

PARKVIEW HEALTH NAMED AMONG BEST WORKPLACES FOR HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS LIST FOR SECOND CONSECUTIVE YEAR

Parkview Health has once again been named one of America's Best Workplaces for Healthcare Professionals by Forbes and Statista.

The health system ranked No. 96 out of 250 employers on this year's list, improving from No. 152 in 2025. Parkview was just one of eight Indiana companies recognized, and the only health system in northern Indiana.

"Parkview's culture is driven by our co-workers, so it's no surprise they've helped to create a workplace where they want to stay and grow," said Dena Jacquay, chief administrative officer, Parkview Health. "We empower our co-workers in both their professional and personal lives, whether it's helping them achieve their next career goal or supporting their family with our many benefits and perks. As Parkview continues to grow and welcome new co-workers, they can feel confident they are joining one of the nation's best healthcare employers."

America's Best Employers for Healthcare Professionals, produced via a partnership between Forbes and Statista, were identified in an independent survey from a vast sample of more than 30,000 U.S. employees working for healthcare and social welfare providers employing at least 1,000 people within the U.S. The ranking evaluates employers based on Atmosphere and Development; Salary and Wage; Image; Company Culture; Working Conditions; and Workplace and celebrates outstanding workplace culture, employee support systems and unwavering commitment to advancing the healthcare professions.

Parkview's nearly 18,000 co-workers have access to numerous benefits and perks to support them both at work and home. This includes tuition reimbursement for further education; a quarterly Lifestyle Benefit stipend reimbursing personal purchases of an individual's choosing; support for working parents including matching funds for childcare, a Backup Childcare program to cover care in unexpected situations and a Tri-Share+ program that splits the cost of childcare three ways; an in-house MyWell-Being department supporting both physical and mental health; 24/7 access to counseling services; free admission to area seasonal events; and 16 hours of Volunteer Time Off per year among other benefits.

Parkview's voluntary retention rate remains above 90%, and higher than national benchmarks in the healthcare industry.

"Parkview's workplace culture is critical to supporting the high-quality care we deliver to patients," said Dr. Ray Dusman, president, physician and clinical enterprise. "Parkview is able to attract and retain the talented, devoted and compassionate doctors, nurses and caregivers who serve our communities. The investment Parkview makes in our co-workers is an investment in our patients."

Parkview has been repeatedly recognized for its world-class workplace environment and culture. Parkview was named the No. 5 Most Loved Workplace in America in 2025; named the No. 1 nonprofit and No. 8 overall in North America and ranked among the Top 100 in the world by Inspiring Places to Work; selected among Forbes' Best-in-State Employers for the fifth consecutive year; and ranked among Newsweek's Best Places to Work in Health Care for the second consecutive year.

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Antwerp's Small Business Saturday PRESENTS THE ANTWERP EXPRESS

NOVEMBER 28th

THE ANTWERP EXPRESS BRINGS HALLMARK CHRISTMAS MAGIC TO SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

The charm of a Hallmark Christmas movie is coming to Antwerp as the community prepares for a festive Small Business Saturday celebration on November 28, 2026! Coordinated by the Meet Me in Antwerp group, this year's event promises a memorable day of holiday shopping, community spirit and Christmas cheer, complete with a trolley to transport shoppers throughout town.

The highlight of this year's celebration will be The Antwerp Express, a trolley providing transportation between designated stops throughout the community. Shoppers can gather their friends and family, enjoy breakfast or a warm cup of hot chocolate, and spend the day discovering unique Christmas gifts while supporting local businesses.

From downtown storefronts to home-based businesses, Antwerp offers plenty of opportunities to find something special. The Antwerp Winter Express Downtown Shopping & Trolley Map will help visitors navigate the participating locations and make the most of their shopping experience.

The Antwerp Express trolley will feature five designated stops:

1. Antwerp Community Church – 704 Erie Street
2. NAPA – 5141 County Road 424
3. Antwerp Police Station
4. Raised at Home
5. Mercer Landmark

Participating businesses and locations featured on the shopping map include Genesis House, Upper Nine, West Bend Printing & Publishing, Inc., Quarters on Us, Small Town Bliss, Oasis Bar & Grill, Petals & Vines, Front Porch Fuel, Gas Station, Raised at Home, Root Foot Stand, Mercer Landmark, VFW, Vendor Mall (beside More Than Boutique), More Than a Boutique, Strong Tower Fitness, Ignite Dance Studio, Red Letter Photography, CC Banks, H2O, Krazy Krafters and Friends, Main Street Creamery, Antwerp Distillery, NAPA, Antwerp Police Station, Antwerp Exchange Bank and Antwerp Community Church.

The Small Business Saturday Welcome Center will be located at the Krazy Krafters Holiday Sale, 210 S. Main Street in Antwerp, beside the H2O Water Store. Visitors can stop by to pick up shopping maps, learn about participating businesses and plan their journey aboard The Antwerp Express. Maps will also be available at participating Small Business Saturday locations.

ANTWERP CHAMBER OFFERS RECEIPT DRAWINGS

The Antwerp Chamber of Commerce is adding another incentive to shop locally with special receipt drawings offering shoppers the opportunity to win $100 or $25 in Chamber Bucks.

Shoppers who spend $50 or more at ONE Antwerp Chamber of Commerce member business will qualify for the $100 Chamber Bucks drawing. Those who spend between $25 and $49 at ANY combination of Antwerp Chamber member business will qualify for the $25 Chamber Bucks drawing.

To enter, shoppers must drop off their qualifying receipts at the Small Business Saturday Welcome Center, located at the Krazy Krafters Holiday Sale, before 2:00 p.m. on November 28.

HOLIDAY HIDE AND SEEK ADDS TO THE FUN

Adding to the excitement, the popular Shop Small Holiday Hide and Seek event has returned! In partnership with Meet Me in Antwerp and participating local businesses, the holiday treasure hunt began Monday, November 16.

Special envelopes have been hidden throughout Antwerp, each containing a gift card or discount from a participating local business. Residents and visitors are encouraged to keep their eyes open as they explore town and discover these holiday surprises.

To give more people an opportunity to participate, there is a limit of two envelopes per person. Those who discover an envelope are encouraged to share their finds on the event's social media posts.

The activity encourages residents to visit local businesses, discover new shopping destinations and enjoy a little extra holiday fun leading up to Small Business Saturday.

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING SET FOR NOVEMBER 30

The holiday festivities will continue on Monday, November 30, with Antwerp's annual Christmas Tree Lighting at 6:00 p.m. at the tennis court besdie Town Hall on North Main Street, downtown Antwerp.

Residents and visitors are invited to join Mayor Bryan Smith for the lighting of the community Christmas tree, officially welcoming the Christmas season to Antwerp.

The evening will feature Christmas music by Austin Bowers, hot cocoa and cookies from Main Street Creamery, providing a festive opportunity for families and friends to gather and celebrate the season together.

Genesis House Coffee Shop will also be open during the event, offering another opportunity to enjoy the warmth and hospitality of Antwerp's local businesses.

MAKE A DAY OF IT IN ANTWERP!

Small Business Saturday is about more than finding the perfect Christmas gift. It's an opportunity to celebrate the businesses and individuals who make Antwerp a wonderful place to live, work and shop. Every purchase made locally helps support the people who invest in the community throughout the year.

Whether you're searching for Christmas gifts, enjoying a meal with friends, visiting a favorite shop or simply taking a ride on The Antwerp Express, Saturday, November 28, promises to be a day filled with small-town Christmas charm.

Gather your friends, bring the family and make a day of it! Enjoy breakfast, shop for gifts, stop for lunch and perhaps finish the afternoon with another cup of hot chocolate.

The celebration continues Monday evening, November 30, as the community gathers for the Christmas tree lighting.

Mark your calendars for November 28 and November 30, and experience a little Hallmark Christmas magic right here in Antwerp. Shop small, support local and help make this holiday season special for the entire community!

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OHIO 4-H YOUTH COLLECT 359,657 POUNDS OF FOOD THROUGH FIGHT THE HUNGER, STOCK THE TRAILER



Photo credit of Farm Credit Mid-America.

This summer, 4-H youth across Ohio collected 359,657 pounds of food for more than 50 local food banks through the Fight the Hunger, Stock the Trailer competition.

Presented by Farm Credit Mid-America and sponsored by Rural 1st, the competition brought together 57 county fairs across Ohio. Participating 4-H youth collected food for local food banks while earning funds to support their county organizations.

"Fight the Hunger, Stock the Trailer is a great example of rural communities working together to support their neighbors and strengthen the places they call home," said Melanie Strait-Bok, Farm Credit Mid-America's senior vice president of agricultural lending in Ohio. "More than 1.8 million Ohioans experience food insecurity, according to Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap study.

Seeing Ohio youth step up to address that challenge shows the difference young people can make in their communities."

Fifty-seven county fairs participated this year, with the Hartford Independent Fair earning the statewide top spot after collecting 31,700 pounds of food.

Farm Credit Mid-America provided $78,500 to 4-H county fair boards across Ohio this summer. Each participating junior county fair board received $500 to put toward its activities, while the top three fairs in each of five regions received additional funding. First-place fairs receive $5,000, second-place fairs receive $3,500 and third-place fairs receive $1,500. The regional winners are listed below.

East Central Ohio – 153,521 pounds of food

- First Place: Hartford Independent Fair, 31,700 pounds
- Second Place: Guernsey County Fair, 31,059 pounds
- Third Place: Muskingum County Fair, 23,642 pounds

Northeast Ohio – 86,551 pounds of food

- First Place: Ashland County Fair, 28,303 pounds
- Second Place: Lorain County Fair, 13,480 pounds
- Third Place: Lake County Fair, 12,512 pounds

Northwest Ohio – 49,891 pounds of food

- First Place: Fulton County Fair, 20,483 pounds
- Second Place: Paulding County Fair, 12,478 pounds
- Third Place: Mercer County Fair, 6,460 pounds

South Ohio – 49,166 pounds of food

- First Place: Ross County Fair, 20,120 pounds
- Second Place: Madison County Fair, 10,740 pounds
- Third Place: Clermont County Fair, 7,668 pounds

West Central Ohio – 20,527 pounds of food

- First Place: Champaign County Fair, 4,440 pounds
- First Place: Greene County Fair, 4,440 pounds
- Third Place: Preble County Fair, 3,928 pounds

Fight the Hunger, Stock the Trailer is one way Farm Credit Mid-America and its consumer lending brand, Rural 1st, invest in the next generation of agriculture. In 2025, Farm Credit Mid-America contributed $260,000 to programs supporting young agricultural leaders in Ohio, including $85,000 for Ohio 4-H programs. Across its territory, the association contributed more than $4 million to programs supporting rural communities and agriculture in 2025.

To learn more about Farm Credit Mid-America and its commitment to supporting local communities, visit www.fcma.com. To read more about the Fight the Hunger, Stock the Trailer program, visit https://www.fcma.com/community/strengthening-communities/feeding-communities/stock-the-trailer.

OHIO'S DEER GUN HUNTING SEASON OPENS MONDAY, NOV. 30

COLUMBUS, Ohio – The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife announced that Ohio's weeklong white-tailed deer gun hunting season opens on Monday, Nov. 30. The gun hunting season is open until Sunday, Dec. 6, with an additional weekend of hunting on Dec. 19-20.

Excitement for deer gun week remains high for Ohio's hunters. During the 2025 gun seasons (gun week, December gun weekend, and youth weekend), hunters checked 111,042 deer. That total includes 85,448 deer taken during the seven-day gun season. Hunters ages 17 and younger checked 9,759 deer during the 2025 youth weekend, and another 15,835 deer in the December gun weekend. The three-year average (2023 to 2025) for these seasons is 107,397.

The gun hunting season is open until Sunday, Dec. 6, with an additional weekend of hunting on Dec. 19-20.

Coshocton (3,037), Ashtabula (3,031), Tuscarawas (2,764), Muskingum (2,581), and Knox (2,558) counties led the state in deer taken during the 2025 seven-day gun season.

During deer gun seasons, all hunters, regardless of implement, are required to wear hunter orange clothing. Legal hunting implements during the gun seasons include shotguns, straight-walled cartridge rifles, muzzleloaders, handguns, and archery equipment. Ohio's deer muzzleloader hunting season is Jan. 2-5, 2027, when muzzleloaders and archery equipment are legal hunting implements.

So far during archery season, hunters have checked 90,636 deer. Hunters interested in tracking the season's count can view weekly deer harvest reports at wildohio.gov (https://ohiodnr.gov/discover-and-learn/safety-conservation/wildlife-management/wildlife-population-studies/deer-harvest-summary) . The Division of Wildlife posts the number of deer checked each Wednesday throughout the hunting season. A final report is posted after the conclusion of the archery season.

Deer gun hunting regulations

All deer taken in Ohio are required to be checked in the Ohio Wildlife Licensing System (https://oh-licensing.s3licensing.com/) . This gives the Division of Wildlife a long-term dataset that aids wildlife biologists in monitoring deer health, distribution, and relative abundance. Hunters can check game by using the HuntFishOH mobile app, visiting HuntFishOH.gov (https://oh-licensing.s3licensing.com/) , calling 1-877-TAG-IT-OH (1-877-824-4864), visiting a license sales agent, or calling 1-866-703-1298 (landowner operator-assisted; fees apply).

The 2026-27 hunting and trapping regulations are available here https://dam.assets.ohio.gov/image and include information on county bag limits, game check, and licenses and permits. Hunters are required to have a valid hunting license and deer permit before heading into the field. A one-year resident hunting license costs $19 and is valid through Feb. 28, 2027. Either-sex deer permits, $31.20 for resident adults, are available statewide through Feb. 7, 2027, and can be used on antlered and antlerless deer. Deer management permits, available for $15, can be used on private land and public hunting areas throughout the season for antlerless deer. Licenses can be purchased at HuntFishOH.gov (https://oh-licensing.s3licensing.com/?catalogItem=Fishing) , on the HuntFish OH (https://ohiodnr.gov/buy-and-apply/hunting-fishing-boating/hunting-resources/huntfishoh-mobile-app) mobile app, or at a license sales agent.

The Division of Wildlife has implemented a new licensing system (https://oh-licensing.s3licensing.com/?catalogItem=Fishing) that requires a login with a unique email address to purchase online. Hunters and anglers are encouraged to purchase products early to avoid confusion. To improve accuracy in matching an online account, it is recommended to use an individual's customer ID, which may be found on previous licenses.

Here are further tips to navigate the new online system.

* When submitting game check, be sure to double-check the harvest is submitted under the correct hunter's account.

* Multiple options are available to purchase a license and report a harvest, including online, the HuntFish OH mobile app, a license agent, and operator assisted (additional fees apply).

* Review FAQs (https://oh-licensing.s3licensing.com/help/faq) for additional tips and help in navigating the new site

Field to Food Bank Program

The Division of Wildlife's Field to Food Bank program is accepting deer donations on select dates during the hunting season. Hunters drop off donations at designated locations, then Division of Wildlife staff transport donated deer to the Ohio Penal Industries' meat processing facility at Pickaway Correctional Institution. Processed and packaged venison is distributed to regional food banks in coordination with the Ohio Association of Foodbanks.

Whole, field-dressed deer are accepted at the donation locations. Donated deer are required to be properly tagged and game-checked, and hunters are required to have a license and deer permit before heading into the field, unless exempted. All donated deer count toward county and statewide bag limits. Donation opportunities continue to be added throughout the season. Check donation dates and nearby locations at ohiodnr.gov/DonateVenison

For those who cannot donate a harvest, monetary donations to the program help cover processing and packing costs.

Chronic Wasting Disease surveillance

For the 2026-27 hunting season, the disease surveillance area includes all of Allen, Hardin, Marion, and Wyandot counties; Bucyrus, Dallas, Holmes, and Tod townships in Crawford County; Marlboro, Oxford, and Troy townships in Delaware County; Delaware, Madison, and Van Buren townships in Hancock County; Westfield Township in Morrow County; and Claibourne and Jackson townships in Union County. On Nov 30 and Dec. 1, successful hunters in the disease surveillance area are required to submit their harvest for sampling. Successful hunters are not required to surrender their deer.

Self-serve kiosks are available for mandatory sample submission during the gun season and for voluntary sample submission until the close of the deer archery season on Feb. 7, 2027. Staffed sampling locations and self-serve kiosks can be found on the Division of Wildlife's CWD database.

The database also displays

PAULDING FFA MEMBERS RECEIVE FFA JACKET FROM BLUE JACKET PROGRAM



Pictured here are the 5 Paulding FFA members who were selected to receive a FFA from the Beck's Blue Jacket program left to right Katherine Arend, Hudson Spangler, Symon Manz holding a Paulding FFA Jacket, Balan Miller and Elayna Klemen.

By: Makenna Manz, FFA Reporter

On November 10th, the Ohio Foundation announced the list of members who will receive a FFA jacket through the Ohio FFA Foundation's Blue Jacket program.

The Paulding FFA had several first year members apply to receive a jacket by filling out a few essay questions about their future plans in the FFA program.We are excited to announce that 5 Paulding FFA members were selected to receive a jacket.

Those members were Katherine Arend, Symon Manz, Hudson Spangler, Balan Miller, and Elayna Klemen. These members were part of the 409 jackets that were donated to first-year Ohio FFA members! Opportunities like this are not possible without the generous support of our local Beck's dealers and donors across the state.

These members were very excited to be selected and are looking forward to wearing their Paulding FFA jacket with pride throughout their high school careers. Congratulations again to all these members and a special thanks to Paulding County Farm Bureau, Wenninger Seed Service Inc. and AgVantage Seed Center for sponsoring our jackets through this program.

We are so thankful for the wonderful community support of our FFA Chapter!

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PAULDING'S FFA TRAPSHOOTING TEAM IS STILL GOING STRONG!



Pictured left to right in back row: Harley Troyer,Lily Leatherman, Remington Boroff, Owen Workman, Nolan Schlatter and Weston Manz. Front row is Lane Sprow with his plaque and Sal Biliti with his plaque.

By: Makenna Manz,
Paulding FFA Reporter

On Saturday, October 31st, eight Paulding FFA members came out to participate in the October trapshoot at the Paulding Fish and Game Center.

This was the third trapshoot of the school year. Philip and Luke Jackson from the Paulding Fish and Game club reviewed safety and the event rules with members before they received their equipment.

Contestants then grabbed earplugs, safety glasses, and their firearms to compete in the competition. At the range, contestants were then separated into different squads where they were able to rotate through 5 different shooting positions.

Members competing were Harley Troyer, Lily Leatherman, Sal Biliti, Remington Boroff, Owen Workman, Lane Sprow, Nolan Schlatter, and Weston Manz. Lane Sprow shot a 20 out of 25 and won the plaque sponsored by our FFA Chapter.

There was then a round of game shooting that was won by Sal Biliti. We would like to thank the Fish and Game Club and its members for all their help and support for the Paulding FFA program.

The next trapshoot is scheduled for November 18th at 5:30 pm under the lights at the Paulding Fish and Game Club. We would like to invite FFA alumni to come out and trapshoot with our members for an under the lights competition.

WT GROVER HILL ELEMENTARY NOVEMBER STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



WTGH Elementary School recently announced their Students of the Month. Pictured above are (front row, l-r): Isabella Roque Vargas, Gabriel Selzer, Hudson Greear, Aubree Dias, Mason Noffsinger, Olivia Brooks and Emma Harris; (back row, l-r): Kain Evans, Kolby Reichert, Bowen Sinn, Emily McClure, Bode Roth, Kipton Jay, Aliyah Duer, and Gabe Schlatter. Not present at time of photo: Hadee Voll and Kaden Shoup.

current and historical CWD test results, and hunters can look up their harvest sample results.

In addition to mandatory testing, the disease surveillance area also has special regulations regarding the use of bait and transport of carcasses. Visit ohiodnr.gov/cwd to learn more about Chronic Wasting Disease and special regulations. Outside of the disease surveillance area, hunters can have harvested deer tested by the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory, which can be reached at (614) 728-6220.

Help protect Ohio's wildlife resources in the gun seasons and beyond. Report any wildlife violations to the division's Turn In a Poacher (TIP) hotline by calling 1-800-POACHER (762-2437). All reports remain anonymous, and tipsters may be eligible for a cash reward.

The mission of the Division of Wildlife is to conserve and improve fish and wildlife resources and their habitats for sustainable use and appreciation by all. Visit wildohio.gov to find out more.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Hicksville Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on

Nov 30th, 2026, at 6:00pm

at Hicksville City Hall in Council Chambers.

The application submitted by Village of Hicksville for Lot Splits on Labar Dr.

—Zoning Official
Village of Hicksville
Brian Demland

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

The Hicksville Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on Nov 30th, 2026, at 5:30pm at City Hall in Council Chambers.

The application submitted by Kaitlyn Warren for a Variance for Ordinance 505.13 Keeping Animals Near Dwellings. Kaitlyn is requesting to remove the 100' from occupied dwelling.

—Zoning Official
Village of Hicksville
Brian Demland

STUDY ADVANCES NEW PATH FOR BETTER METHANOL MANUFACTURING

Dialing up the power on electricity-driven chemical reactions doesn't guarantee that they'll be more efficient, suggests a new study, a finding that gets researchers closer to creating the ideal conditions for sustainable chemical manufacturing.

Scientists identified this limitation by converting carbon monoxide into methanol — a vital fuel source and industrial ingredient — showing that how well the reaction works depends not only on applied voltage, but also on how quickly a catalyst binds to carbon monoxide molecules.

By revealing how certain steps control the reaction's speed, these findings could help scientists design better methods and processes for producing cleaner fuels and chemicals, said Zhihao Cui, lead author of the study and a postdoctoral student in chemistry at The Ohio State University.

"We really want to replace conventional chemical manufacturing with sustainable chemical manufacturing powered by renewable electricity," said Cui. "But to achieve that goal, we first need to overcome the fundamental restraints that stand in the way."

One such restriction includes the effort it takes to turn carbon monoxide into methanol, a tedious, time-intensive process. Yet this team's results provide new insights into how to design catalysts and their surroundings more efficiently, paving the way for cleaner, more efficient chemical production.

The team achieved this result by attaching a metal-based catalyst to carbon nanotubes — tiny tubes of graphene that have unique electrical properties — and filling them with carbon monoxide. After driving different levels of electricity through each, the team saw that a cobalt-based catalyst could hold onto those molecules more strongly than other metal catalysts.

Through their experiments, researchers also found that both the chemical environment and the binding strength of the catalyst can affect the outcome of a chemical reaction.

"One breakthrough here is that we show that both the surrounding electrolytes and how fast the environment can reorganize to accommodate the molecule influences how quickly molecules adsorb," said Cui. "But what determines how fast carbon monoxide absorbs onto the catalyst depends on how quickly the environment can reorganize to accommodate the molecule."

This means that at lower voltages, the reaction may be limited by how quickly the electrons can transfer to drive the reaction. In contrast, at higher voltages, the race shifts to how quickly carbon monoxide attaches to the catalysts. Both scenarios can slow methanol production.

Further analysis suggests the work has deeper sustainability implications, as converting carbon monoxide into methanol means that the carbon dioxide it originates from can be turned into useful products rather than be released back into Earth's atmosphere, said Anne Co, co-author of the study and a professor in chemistry and biochemistry at Ohio State.

"People have been looking for new ways to use electrolysis, but they hit a ceiling," she said. "But by improving the steps behind the process, we can better use renewable sources to significantly reduce CO2 and CO emissions."

As such, she said, using the team's framework in tandem with carbon utilization technologies could boost industrial interest in sustainable energy and help reduce society's reliance on fossil fuels.

Overall, their work serves as a powerful foundation for developing next-generation catalysts and electrochemical systems critical for the creation of fuels and other important chemicals, said Co.

Next, the team plans to explore whether these findings can also improve other chemical processes, test how well the system performs over longer periods of time, and assess how well their process holds up against conventional methanol production methods.

"There are many directions to explore from this research," said Co. "But I hope to encourage future scientists to ask critical questions and think deeply of their findings."

This work was supported by the U.S. National Science Foundation and Ohio State's Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Alina Mary Varghese of Ohio State was also a co-author.

The West Bend News

Sudoku Puzzle

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

Answers to "Sudoku puzzle on Page 15"

SUMMER HILER AND KAYLA MAVIS EARN AMERICAN FFA DEGREES



Pictured from left are American FFA Degree recipient Kayla Mavis, Fairview FFA advisor Jessica Nagel, and American FFA Degree recipient Summer Hiler.

By: Brooklyn Zeedyk,
Fairview FF A Reporter

Fairview FFA graduates Summer Hiler and Kayla Mavis earned the American FFA Degree on the final day of the 2026 National FFA Convention held in Indianapolis. The American FFA Degree is the highest degree earned by FFA members and represents the dedication of members to agriculture, leadership, and service through the National FFA Organization.

FFA members must have earned their State FFA Degree, been active in FFA for three years, completed the required agricultural education, graduated from high school at least 12 months before the National FFA Convention, maintained an outstanding Supervised Agricultural Experience program with appropriate records for planning, management and financial aspects, meet earnings and investment or work-hour requirements, maintain a "C" average or better, and complete at least 50 hours of community service in three different activities.

These two Fairview FFA graduates have continued to work towards achieving this goal after graduating from high school. Fairview FFA is proud of Summer and Kayla for their hard work and dedication to the Fairview FFA chapter and agricultural community.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

Notice is hereby given that pursuant O.R.C. Section 4928.20 (C) the Village of Payne will hold two separate public hearings on the Villages' Electric Power Aggregation Plan of Operation and Governance on December 14, 2026 at 7pm and on January 11, 2027 at 7pm, both at the Village Payne's Hall at 119 N Main St., Payne, OH 45880.

The Village of Payne's Electric Power Aggregation Plan of Operation and Governance describes the policies and procedures by which Payne will carry out its municipal electric aggregation program, including those policies and procedures, which relate to rates and customer service.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Village at419-263-2514.

Phone: 419-258-2000 • Email: info@westbendnews.net

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Redistribution of Happiness

by Victor Bennett

A heartfelt collection of poetry exploring faith, family, life's challenges, and the hope found in everyday experiences.



NEW RELEASE

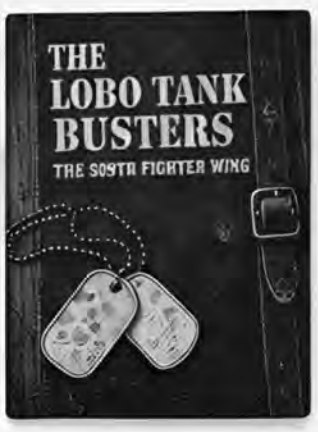
Beyond the Rings of Saturn

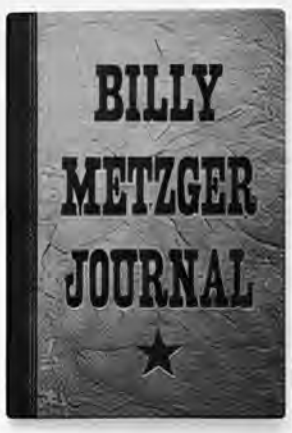
by Duane Bailey

The second book from local author Duane Bailey, sharing more of his experiences, stories, and insights from a lifetime as an Ohio game warden.

MORE BOOKS FROM Local Authors







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FAIRVIEW FFA MEMBERS PUT THEIR SKILLS TO THE TEST



Pictured is the Fairview FFA Dairy Cattle Judging Team.

By: Brooklyn Zeedyk, Fairview FF A Reporter

FFA members from Fairview FFA Chapter were involved in several competitions recently that allowed them to apply their skills in Dairy Cattle Evaluation, Job Interviewing, and Food Science.

Lauren Speiser, Olivia Zeedyk, Sara Bok, Milan Karlstadt, and Clayton Haase were members of the Fairview FFA Chapter who competed in the Job Interview Contest held at Edgerton High School. Members practiced communicating their skills and qualifications as well as answering questions that would be asked in an interview. Milan, Sara, and Lauren advanced to the next level of the competition.

Dairy Cattle Judging Contest participants looked more closely at the characteristics that make up a good dairy animal. Members used their knowledge of agriculture to evaluate the cattle. Bok's Jerseys held the contest, allowing the students to learn in a hands-on environment.

GETTING YOUR TURKEYS IN A ROW EARLY MAY LOWER THANKSGIVING FOOD WASTE

"Pregame" planning and getting your ducks – or turkeys, that is – in a row could help reduce Thanksgiving food waste that topped an estimated 166,000 metric tons last year, a new study suggests.

Researchers found in 2025 surveys of U.S. consumers that almost 75% of people who cooked for a Thanksgiving meal prepared more food than was needed. And in 1 in 5 households, food was wasted well before the bird was carved because families had to clear the fridge to make room for the turkey and trimmings.

"That week of Thanksgiving, people bought about $3 billion worth of food that they then eventually discarded. It's about 40 football fields' worth of discarded food," said corresponding author Brian Roe, professor of agricultural, environmental and development economics at The Ohio State University.

"That's about 40% more than what happened in a typical week during the late autumn season of that same year. And so that's a pretty healthy chunk of change, particularly as people are concerned about high food prices right now."

Roe completed the research with former Ohio State PhD student Ran Li, who is now an assistant professor of agribusiness management at Penn State University.

The study was published last month in the journal Waste.

Food waste in the United States is a perennial concern: About a third of food that's produced is never consumed, wasting resources – such as land, labor, energy and transportation – and loading landfills with organic material that causes water and air pollution and generates the greenhouse gas methane.

But traditional food waste estimates haven't taken into account how much food-centered holidays might contribute to the problem, Roe said.

"There's not a lot of great data out there about which holidays cause the most waste. My money would be on Thanksgiving because it is so focused around the meal – it is the big tradition," he said. "And we're seeing from our data that there was only about 1 in 5 of respondents that did not participate in the Thanksgiving meal, so that's a full 80% of people who are involved in one way or another with the holiday meal at Thanksgiving time."

Roe and Li conducted four surveys of U.S. adults in the fall of 2025: 879 respondents completed pre- and post-Thanksgiving Day questionnaires, and 506, many from the Thanksgiving group of participants, self-reported their food prep and waste in mid-December and seven days later.

From that data, the analysis showed that the same households wasted about 39% more food during Thanksgiving week than they did over the course of a week the following month. Overall, Thanksgiving-related food waste added up to about 166,000 metric tons, compared with 122,400 metric tons of food wasted during the comparison week in December.

The findings covered a range of factors that contributed to edible food being tossed around the holiday. Results included:

• 11% of respondents both hosted and attended a meal, and produced the most Thanksgiving week food waste, averaging 1.8 pounds per person.

• The 26% who only hosted a meal wasted an average of 1 pound per person, while the 43% who only attended a meal wasted about 1.2 pounds per person.

• Households that both hosted and attended a holiday meal wasted 140% more food than those who didn't participate in Thanksgiving. Those who only hosted discarded 78% more and those who only attended tossed 59% more food than non-celebrants.

• Produce accounted for the greatest amount of Thanksgiving week food waste, followed by grains and starch, meat and fish, dairy and eggs, and drinks.

The most popular reasons for preparing more food than needed were to deliberately end up with leftovers, uncertainty about how much was needed, and expectations that excess food should be available.

"About 25% said that they overprepared because they were unsure of how much people would eat," Roe said. "I think that was really critical because that group that didn't know how to estimate their guests' appetites were actually some of the most wasteful individuals that we saw in terms of the reporting."

He noted the Natural Resources Defense Council website savethefood.com features a "Guest-Imator" tool that can help people calculate how much food they should prepare as dinner party hosts or guests.

Some consumers did report efforts to curb waste of the leftover holiday food – for example, 37% of hosts sent their guests home with to-go containers.

Learning how much food gets discarded before the holiday creates a prevention opportunity, Roe and Li noted in the paper, writing that "'use-it-up' campaigns could reduce waste before the main event even begins."

"About 1 in 5 individuals wasted a lot of additional food just because they're trying to make room for that turkey in their fridge. They would clear out a bunch of stuff," said Roe, noting that "pregame" planning to use up refrigerated items is a way to avoid disposing of perfectly good food.

"Think about what's in the fridge that can be used up before the turkey's coming in so that you can have that place for all your fixings for the holiday meal."

This work was supported by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

PATROL INVESTIGATING FATAL CRASH ON STATE ROUTE 576

Montpelier - The Defiance Post of the Ohio State Highway Patrol is investigating a one vehicle crash that occurred in Bridgewater Township, Williams County on Thursday, November 12, 2026. The crash occurred on State Route 576 two tenths of a mile south of milepost 2 at 10:00 a.m.

The preliminary investigation revealed that a 2002 Chevrolet Silverado was northbound on State Route 576 when it crossed the center line, went off the left side of the road and s t r u c k two trees.

The Chevrolet was operated by Patrick Dean Stevens, age 27 of Camden, Michigan. Mr. Stevens was wearing his safety belt at the time of the crash. Mr. Stevens was pronounce deceased at the scene of tho crash. There was a child in the vehicle a the time of the crash and was properly restrained. The child was taken to Parkview Montpelier Hospital with minor injuries.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol was assisted on scene by the Williams County Sheriff's Office, Williams County EMS, Madison Township Fire Department, and Hutch's Towing.

The crash remains under investigation.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol wants to remind motorists to never text and drive distracted, and to always wear your safety belt.

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Shop Tools, Household, John Deere Tractor, Lawn Mowers

AUCTION LOCATION: 16047 State Route 49 Antwerp, Ohio 45813
Approx. 2 Miles North of Antwerp on State Route 49.
Watch for Auction Signs!

DECEMBER 1st, 2026 @ 3 PM

Tractors, Lawn Mowers, etc: John Deere 770 Tractor with Loader... John Deere 550 Tiller... John Deere 3pt Blade... 3pt Sprayer, PTO Driven Pump and Boom... Large Yard Aerator... 3pt Plow... Wheel Horse 308-B Garden Tractor, With Mower Deck and Snow Blower... John Deere 3pt Flail Type Mower... John Deere Back Hoe Attachment... Walk Behind Tiller... John Deere 777 Z Track Zero Turn Mower, 72in Deck... Honda Pressure Washer... Chainsaws... Leaf Blowers... Push Mowers... Rakes... Shovels... Garden Hose... Hoes... Paddle Boat...
Shop/Woodworking Tools: Miter Saw on Stand... Tabletop Jigsaw... Air Compressors... Sanders... Clamps... Table Saw... Sawzall... Band Saw... etc etc etc
Tools: Hammers... Several Wrench Sets... Screwdrivers... Crescent Wrenches... Channellocks... Tools Chests... Pliers... Welders... Torch Set... Electric Motors... Propane Tanks... Saws... Gas Cans... Very Large Generator on Homemade Cart, Runs... Pipe Wrenches... Nails... Screws... Bolts... Contents of the Building... 2 Large Parking Lot Lights, heavy duty... etc etc etc
Household: Bedroom Suite... Couches... End Tables... 2 Old Safes... Gun Cabinet... Chairs... Kirby Vaccuum... Rocking Chairs... Lamps... etc etc etc
Auctioneer's Note: Gorrell Bros. has sold Joan's house and will be downsizing. This is a very large auction with lots of nice, clean items. 3 Flatbed Wagons Full of Misc. Tools. Still unboxing and sorting through the items. We will sell in 2 rings. Bring a friend!
WATCH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR DETAILS, PICTURES, AND UPDATES... INSPECTION FOR ALL ITEMS WILL BE NOVEMBER 30th FROM 2-5PM AND BEGINNING AT 8:30AM AM DAY OF THE AUCTION... TERMS: CASH, GOOD CHECK, OR CREDIT CARDS (with a 4% convenience fee) AT THE DAY OF THE AUCTION.
Seller: Pier Family...
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Antiques, Toys, and Tools
LIVE AND ONLINE AUCTION

AUCTION LOCATION: 24438 Road 86 Oakwood, Ohio 45873
Head east on State Route 613 towards Continental. Turn Right onto Road 211. One Mile to Auction Location.
Watch for Auction Signs!

Fri. November 27th, 2026 @ 10AM

1998 Harley Davidson Trike Motorcycle... XL 883 Hug, Trike Conversion Kit, Corvette Style Body, VERY Nice Condition... Old Children's Toys... Farm Literature, Old Clothes Drying Racks... Several Vintage Tins... Pens... Pencils... Rulers... Topps Baseball Cards... Several Old Feed and Seed Sacks... Child's Rocking Horse... Sleigh Bells... Old Roller Skates... Porcelain Pots and Pans... Crocks... Old Lanterns... Several Glass Bottles... Milk Bottles... Oil Lamps... Marbles... Several Lots of Blue Glassware... Old Children's Books... Baking Dishes... Mixing Bowls... Hot Wheels Cars... Mail Pouch Tobacco Thermometer, Nice Condition... Christmas Blow Molds... Children's Toy Kitchen... Several Cigar Boxes... Glass Figurines... Child's Doll Bed and Stroller... Several Christmas Villages... Christmas Décor... Christmas Trees... Outdoor Christmas Lights... Portable Air Conditioners... Tool Chest... Curio Cabinet... Furniture... Entertainment Stand... Glass Lamps... Nice Wooden Rocking Chair... End Tables... Vintage Sewing Machine... Cuckoo Clock...

Tools... Step Ladders... Scaffold... Hydraulic Pipe and Tool Bender... Shop Press... Cement Mixer... Large Anvil on Stand... Tiller... Car Ramps... Hand Saws... Woodworking Clamps... Craftsman Drill... Quartz Heaters... Two Flatbed Wagons full of Tools and Other Misc. Items (LIVE AUCTION ONLY)

AUCTIONEER'S NOTE: This is a very large auction. Nice, Clean Items. We will be selling in two rings on auction day so bring a friend! Bidding is live and online!

WATCH OUR FACEBOOK PAGE FOR DETAILS, PICTURES, AND UPDATES... INSPECTION FOR ALL ITEMS WILL BE NOVEMBER 21ST FROM 4-6PM AND BEGINNING AT 8:30AM AM DAY OF THE AUCTION... TERMS: CASH, GOOD CHECK, OR CREDIT CARDS (with a 4% convenience fee) AT THE DAY OF THE AUCTION.

SELLERS: Kent Family... Rita Shew... et al.

Gorrell Bros. Auctioneers LLC 112½ N Water St Paulding, Ohio 45879

AUCTIONEERS: Kenneth D. Thomas: Auction Manager, Zach Gorrell: Broker, Chris Aufrance: Auctioneer

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AUCTION

REAL ESTATE AUCTION
14684 State Route 111 • Defiance, OH 43512

TUESDAY,
NOVEMBER 24, 2026 | 5:30PM

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AUCTION HELD LIVE ON SITE

OPEN HOUSE / INSPECTION: Auction day from 5:00 to 5:30 P.M. Meet a Gorrell Bros. representative at the property.

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PARCEL NUMBER: B11-0008-B-034-00

SELLER: Estate of James L. Kleinhenn
Defiance County Probate Court Case No. E00021441

ATTORNEY FOR THE SELLER: Stephen F. Hubbard, Esq., Hubbard Law Firm *(Sale is subject to court approval)*

FOR COMPLETE AUCTION TERMS AND DETAILS: Visit our website gorrellbrothers.com.

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AGCREDIT AWARDS $125,000 IN MISSION FUND GRANTS TO 12 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS



Freedom Post 183 Calf Club receives their 2026 Mission Fund grant from AgCredit.

AgCredit, one of northern Ohio's largest lenders for farmers, rural homeowners and agribusiness, has awarded $125,000 in Mission Fund grants to 12 community organizations in support of their efforts to improve the quality of life in communities primarily within the cooperative's 18-county service territory.

Over the past nine years, AgCredit has supported over 100 organizations with $962,980.00 distributed through the Mission Fund. The program supports AgCredit's commitment to investing in the future of agriculture and positively impacting the quality of life in rural Ohio. Recipients were selected based on their proposals to meet criteria in one or more of four key areas: Education, environment, technology and quality of rural life.

Following are AgCredit's 2026 Mission Fund grant recipients:

- A.V.R. Fire District, $7,500.00
- Bascom Joint Fire District, $14,750.60
- Crawford County Agricultural Society Jr. Fair Board, $10,000.00
- Grand Rapids Township Fire Department, $11,000.00
- Marion Township Hamler Volunteer Fire Department, $15,000.00
- Ottawa Volunteer Fire Department, $7,500.00
- Pleasant Township Fire Department, $15,000.00
- Post #183 Calf Club, $5,250.00
- Vanlue Fire Department, $7,500.00
- Washington Township Fire Department – Tontogany, $15,000.00
- Whetstone Twp Fire Department, $9,000.00
- Wyandot County Agricultural Society, $7,500.00

"Strong agricultural communities depend on organizations that are committed to making a difference. We are proud to support this year's Mission Fund recipients as they work to improve the quality of life in the communities we serve," said AgCredit President and CEO Brian Ricker. "Through these grants, we are honored to help move their efforts forward and invest in a stronger future for agriculture and rural Ohio."

Organizations may apply for Mission Fund grants of up to $15,000 per year. The 2027 application process will begin March 1, 2027, and funds will be distributed by Dec. 31. For more information about the lending cooperative or the Mission Fund, visit AgCredit.net.

USDA BEGINS HIRING FOR NATION'S LARGEST FACILITY TO COMBAT NEW WORLD SCREWWORM

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will begin hiring for 228 positions at the New World Screwworm (NWS) Sterile Fly Production Facility in Edinburg, Texas, starting this month.

"Protecting U.S. livestock and wildlife from New World Screwworm is a national security priority, and this new facility will drastically boost the availability of sterile flies – our most successful offensive capability to drive these serious pests away from our border," said Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins. "The people filling these vital positions will serve at the front lines in our battle against this serious pest and help ensure that we again eradicate it from our country. Thanks to the speed of the Trump Administration and the support of the Department of War and the Army Corps of Engineers, this facility will open in record speed, nearly five years ahead of schedule."

"The men and women of USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service are vital to defending our nation against invasive pests and diseases that could devastate the agricultural industry, and we need skilled professionals dedicated to this mission on our front lines," said Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Dudley Hoskins. "This hiring event gives people who may never have considered working in government an opportunity to join a mission worthy of the challenging work."

The hiring event was held at the Embassy Suites by Hilton McAllen Convention Center, 800 Convention Center Blvd. in McAllen, Texas; Nov. 17-19, 2026. Hiring managers were on site and conducted interviews during the event.

The new facility housed at Moore Air Base in Edinburg, Texas, helps achieve a cornerstone of Secretary Rollins' five-pronged strategy (PDF, 1005 KB) to combat NWS, expanding the nation's domestic capacity to protect livestock, wildlife, and public health from this serious pest.

The sterile insect technique is a sustainable, eco-friendly way to control insect pests by disrupting their ability to reproduce. In a biosecure environment, NWS flies are raised and sterilized using irradiation before being released in targeted areas. Because female screwworm flies mate only once, mating with sterile males results in eggs that do not hatch. Sterile flies are safe—because they can't produce larvae, they cannot cause harm. They pose no risk to animals or people.

This technique, paired with surveillance, animal movement restrictions and education and outreach, has been the foundation of successful screwworm eradication efforts for decades.

Construction will be completed at the Texas facility in April 2027. It will be the first U.S.-based sterile fly production facility and is anticipated to begin producing 100 million sterile flies per week in 2027 and approximately 300 million sterile flies per week once it is operating at full capacity. Currently, USDA funds two sterile fly production facilities in North America. The facility in Panama is the backbone of current efforts, producing 100 million sterile flies per week. The facility in Mexico opened in June 2026 and continues to ramp up production. It is expected to produce 100 million sterile flies per week once it has reached full capacity.

Once fully operational, this expanded production network will provide the speed, scale, and domestic capability needed to rapidly counter any NWS threat—reducing risks to producers, protecting animal health, and strengthening the resilience of America's livestock industry.

Fertile screwworms infest living tissue of warm-blooded animals and pose a threat to livestock and wildlife. However, they are not a food safety concern because they do not infest meat, fruits, vegetables, or other food sources.

For more information about New World Screwworm and USDA's prevention efforts, visit Screwworm.gov.

ODNR CELEBRATES GRADUATION OF THREE NEW K9 TEAMS SERVING OHIO'S NATURAL RESOURCES



The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) proudly recognized the newest members of its law enforcement K9 program during a graduation ceremony held November 10 at the Spring Valley Education Center. The ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of three highly trained K9 teams representing the ODNR Divisions of Parks and Watercraft and Wildlife. These new teams will play a vital role in protecting Ohio's natural resources, supporting search and rescue efforts, and strengthening community engagement across the state.

"ODNR's K9 program reflects our commitment to providing officers with the tools they need to keep people safe and protect Ohio's incredible natural spaces," said ODNR Director Mary Mertz. "These K9 teams bring specialized skills, unmatched dedication, and a deep bond with their handlers. We are proud to welcome them into the ODNR family and grateful for the important work they will do."

Natural Resources Officer (NRO) D'Angelo Thigpen, stationed out of Rocky Fork State Park and serving the Southwest Unit C region, graduated alongside his new partner, K9 Frank, a male chocolate Labrador Retriever. NRO Thigpen joined ODNR in 2020 and was selected as a K9 handler in March 2026.

Natural Resources Officer (NRO) D'Angelo Thigpen graduated alongside his new partner, K9 Frank, a male chocolate Labrador Retriever.

K9 Frank was purchased from Tar Heel K9 in Sanford, North Carolina, thanks to generous donations from Friends of Ohio K9 and Little Blessings. Additional K9 equipment, including collars, leashes, harnesses, and first aid supplies, was provided through a donation from AMVETS Post 61 to Friends of Ohio K9.

"These K9 teams provide invaluable support in search operations, evidence recovery, and public outreach," said Division of Parks and Watercraft Chief Glen Cobb. "There is nothing more important to our officers than serving the public with professionalism, preparedness, and heart. We're proud of Officer Thigpen and K9 Frank and excited to see the impact they will make across Ohio's state parks and waterways."

State Wildlife Officer Michele Butler, assigned to Erie County, graduated with K9 River, a male black Labrador Retriever purchased from Five T K9 Enterprises. Butler joined ODNR in 2018 and began field service in 2019.

State Wildlife Officer Michele Butler graduated with K9 River, a male black Labrador Retriever.

State Wildlife Officer Gus Kiebel, currently assigned to Adams County, graduated with K9 Gar, a male yellow Labrador Retriever purchased through support from the Safari Club International Southwest Ohio Chapter and the Karr-Aanestad K9 Foundation Fund. Officer Kiebel has served Ohio's wildlife community since 2012.

State Wildlife Officer Gus Kiebel graduated with K9 Gar, a male yellow Labrador Retriever.

"K9 River and K9 Gar will be extraordinary assets to wildlife officers conducting investigations, recovering evidence, and strengthening wildlife protection across Ohio," said Division of Wildlife Chief Kendra Wecker. "Our K9 program is a powerful example of how dedication, training, and strong partnerships come together to enhance the work we do every day."

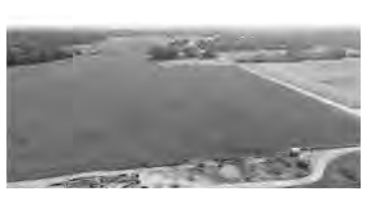
The ODNR K9 program continues to expand its capabilities and strengthen the agency's presence across Ohio's outdoor spaces. These specially trained teams provide critical support through tracking, evidence detection, public outreach, and education.

"We are grateful to all the partners, donors, and community supporters who helped make these new K9 teams possible," Mertz added. "Their contributions not only enhance officer safety and effectiveness—they help protect Ohio's natural resources for generations to come."

For more information about ODNR law enforcement programs and K9 initiatives, visit ohiodnr.gov.

Property For Sale

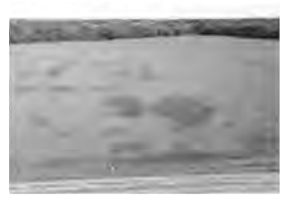


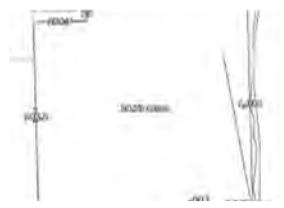




TBD State Rd 1, Saint Joe, IN 46785 – Discover your own private slice of Saint Joe, Indiana with this 29.5± acre property offering a unique blend of space, agricultural potential, and dream-home possibilities. Featuring tillable land and a picturesque river backdrop, the land provides both beauty and functionality—ideal for buyers seeking a peaceful setting while keeping options open for future use. The property is residential agricultural and includes tillable ground, offering opportunities for farming/land stewardship. Whether you envision building a custom residence, a barndominium-style home, or a homestead with room to breathe, please check with the Local Building Department for Permits. This is a rare opportunity to create your long-term vision on a generous acreage parcel in a desirable area. Don't miss the chance to own!

Lot Dimensions 1306 x 927+- • **School District** Dekalb Co. Eastern







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JEST A MOMENT: WHAT IF AMERICA HAD TAKEN THE TURKEY UNDER ITS WING FOR A NATIONAL SYMBOL?

By: Nick Thomas

This year, the United States celebrated 250 years since the adoption of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Patriotic symbolism has naturally been on display: waving flags, marching bands, nationalistic songs, references to Uncle Sam, the Statue of Liberty and bald eagles, the latter being adopted as an official emblem of the United States a decade later.

As the well-known story goes, in a 1784 letter to his daughter, Benjamin Franklin wrote rather disparagingly of the now widely recognized avian American emblem. Comparing the eagle to the turkey he called the latter "a much more respectable bird and withal a true original native of America." Of course, old Ben never seriously suggested installing the turkey as the National Bird.

But what if we had? The entire symbolic culture of the country could have evolved very differently. For instance, wild turkeys might have appeared on U.S. coinage, banknotes, stamps, passports, and other official symbols of America instead of the eagle.

Today, Eagle Scouts would be called Turkey Scouts, while golfers hitting a rare three holes under par would exclaim, "A double turkey!" The Screaming Eagles, which is the nickname of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division, might indeed have been screaming had they been dubbed the Screaming Turkeys. And could Pennsylvanian NFL fans really get behind the Philadelphia Turkeys?

In the music world, Don Henley and (the late) Glenn Frey might have remained unknown performers had they called themselves "The Turkeys." That would not have evoked a peaceful easy feeling. Beloved American poet Walt Whitman might have been less loved had be published "The Dalliance of Turkeys" in 1880. And much later, in 1968, it would not have made Clint Eastwood's day to star in the war adventure, "Where Turkeys Dare."

Presidential addresses would be delivered from behind a White House lectern featuring a turkey on the Great Seal of the United States – although, given the history of Oval Office occupants, that might not seem entirely inappropriate to some voters.

Even the American space program would've been influenced. When Neil Armstrong transmitted the first message from the Apollo 11 lunar module after landing on the moon in 1969, he surely would have choked on the words, "The Turkey has Landed!"

Of course, eagles outshone turkeys in the symbolic pecking order. With their respective roles now firmly established in American culture, we can give thanks that both birds have served us well.

Nick Thomas has written features, columns, and interviews for many newspapers and magazines. See www.getnickt.org.

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PARKVIEW HEALTH RANKED NO. 3 AMONG 2026 MOST LOVED WORKPLACES

Parkview Health was ranked No. 3 overall in the 2026 Most Loved Workplaces list compiled by the Best Practice Institute and published by Wall Street Journal.

It's the fourth consecutive year Parkview has made the national Most Loved list. Parkview previously ranked No. 5 in 2025, No. 7 in 2024 and No. 87 in 2023. Parkview was one of only three Indiana companies to make this year's list and the only hospital system in the state to be recognized.

"We are extremely proud to once again be named among the top workplaces in the country for our commitment to our workplace culture and our co-workers' well-being," said Dena Jacquay, chief administrative officer, Parkview Health. "Parkview has continued to build its culture around the feedback we receive directly from our co-workers. And, as we continue to grow, we're building the support that our 20,000+ co-workers need to be at their best for our patients every day."

The Best Practice Institute's research uses the proprietary Love of Workplace Index® to assess employees' emotional connection to their organization. The underlying SPARK model examines collaboration, a positive vision for the future, alignment of values, respect, and achievement. Employee feedback provides evidence of how those qualities are experienced at work.

Parkview has built a people-first culture powered by the feedback of its workforce. Parkview co-workers receive numerous benefits and perks, including a quarterly Lifestyle Benefit stipend that reimburses personal purchases of their choosing; support for childcare via programs including matching funds for childcare expenses, participation in a Tri-Share+ plus that splits the cost of care three ways for eligible families, and Backup Childcare agreements to cover care in unexpected situations; 16 hours of Volunteer Time Off; tuition support for further education and certifications; flexible pay options; free admission to seasonal community events; revitalization workshops and 24/7 access to counseling services; an in-house MyWell-Being department supporting the physical and mental health of co-workers and more. Feedback collected from co-workers via multiple channels has led directly to more than two dozen new or expanded benefits over the last several years.

Parkview has been frequently recognized for its workplace culture. The health system earned its first recertification as a Great Place to Work this year; was named a Forbes Best-in-State Employer for five consecutive years; was selected as the No. 1 nonprofit, No. 8 overall Inspiring Place to Work in North America in 2026 and was listed among their Top 100 globally; and has been ranked as one of America's best employers for healthcare professionals by Newsweek, Forbes and Fortune.

"Parkview's commitment to its co-workers has allowed us to build a team of skilled, dedicated, engaged professionals who give their best for the patients they serve," said Dr. Ray Dusman, president, physician and clinical enterprise, Parkview Health. "With a team of more than 20,000 individuals across Indiana and northwest Ohio, Parkview's culture ensures that our teams are empowered to deliver the same high-quality care and excellent patient experience."

To browse open positions at Parkview, visit www.parkview.com/careers

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

Sudoku solution from page 11



VANTAGE STUDENTS MAKE THEIR MARK AT SKILLSUSA OHIO FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Front Row left to right: Lidia Caskey, Natalie Hempker, Kaitlyn Antus, Madeline Coressel, Grace Welch, Adysen Grothouse, Berlyn Hortsman, Gavin Priest, Widnelson Miller. Back Row left to right: Londyn Greear, Logan Koester, Riley Geise, Ryan Kahle, Conner Ladd, Gavin Zartman

Vantage Career Center students made history at the 2026 SkillsUSA Ohio Fall Leadership Conference, held Nov. 12-13 in Columbus, Ohio. Students achieved several milestones, including the election of three Northwest Regional SkillsUSA officers, earning 29 awards for leadership and project management, and representation in the organization's voting delegation.

Held under the theme "Level Up," the conference brought together career-technical education students from across Ohio to develop leadership skills, strengthen professional competencies and prepare for future careers. For Vantage, the event marked several significant firsts and highlighted the growing leadership presence of its students within SkillsUSA.

Among the most notable accomplishments was the election of three Vantage seniors as Northwest Regional SkillsUSA officers.

Riley Geise of Ottoville and Grace Welch of Fort Jennings, both enrolled in Manufacturing and Engineering Technologies under instructor Bob Ward, were elected alongside Madeline Coressel of Antwerp, an Auto Technology student under instructor Larry Davis.

Natalie Hempker, a Jefferson High School senior enrolled in Manufacturing and Engineering Technologies under Ward, was also named a finalist in the regional officer elections.

The newly elected officers will have opportunities to represent fellow SkillsUSA members, strengthen their leadership abilities and contribute to regional initiatives throughout their terms.

Beyond the officer elections, Vantage students received statewide recognition for their accomplishments in leadership development and project management.

Fourteen students earned the Project Management Statesman Award, while 15 received the SkillsUSA Statesman Award. These honors recognize students for demonstrating leadership, organizational skills, professional development and an understanding of SkillsUSA's mission and values.

In addition to the four regional officer candidates, award recipients included Ryan Kahle and Adysen Grothause of Fort Jennings; Kaitlyn Antus of Crestview; Berlyn Horstman, Logan Koester and Lidia Caskey of Ottoville; Gavin Priest of Lincolnview; Londyn Greear of Wayne Trace; Gavin Zartman of Van Wert; Widnelson Miller of Jefferson; and Conner Ladd.

All Statesman Award recipients also earned the Project Management Statesman Award.

Vantage students also took an active role in the conference's voting delegation. Four students served as voting delegates, including Antus, who was selected as the lead voting delegate. Horstman, Koester and Priest also represented Vantage, gaining firsthand experience in organizational leadership, decision-making and representing their peers.

From earning statewide recognition to stepping into regional leadership roles, Vantage students demonstrated that career-technical education extends beyond developing hands-on skills. Their achievements highlight the importance of building confidence, professionalism and leadership abilities that will serve them in their future careers and communities.

PAULDING PUTNAM OFFERS MEMBERS ADDITIONAL BILL CREDITS FOR REGISTERING LOAD MANAGEMENT SWITCHES



Paulding Putnam members who register their existing radio control switch will receive a $10 credit this winter.

As electricity demand continues to increase, especially during the winter months, Paulding Putnam is encouraging members to participate in its load management program by registering their radio-controlled switches (RCS). Members who register their switches can receive an additional $10 in bill credits this winter.

Load management switches help Paulding Putnam manage electricity demand during periods of high energy use. By temporarily controlling certain electric appliances, such as electric water heaters and air conditioning units, the switches help reduce peak demand and support the reliability of the electric system. Participating in the program also helps control costs that can impact electric rates for all members.

As an added incentive, members who register their hot water heater switches will receive a $5 bill credit in both January and February, for a total of $10 in additional winter credits. Members will continue to receive the existing $5 monthly bill credit during the summer peak season (June through August) for participating hot water heater and air conditioning switches

Paulding Putnam is asking members to register all radio-controlled switches at their homes, including switches on both hot water heaters and air conditioning units. This information will help the cooperative update its equipment inventory and ensure its records are accurate.

Members can locate their switches in the following areas:

- **Hot water heater switches**: Typically located near the water heater or next to the home's circuit breaker panel.
- **Air conditioning switches**: Typically located next to the indoor air handler or outside near the heat pump.

To register a switch, members will need its serial number, which can be found on the identification sticker labeled "Property of" on the switch.

Paulding Putnam members can join the Radio Control Switch Program by contacting our office at 800-686-2357 or email member_services@ppec.coop to schedule a free switch installation on their electric water heater.

To learn more about the load management program and register your switches, visit www.PPEC.coop

Help Us Update Our Records

PERI DIST 2 CHAPTER 10 MEETING DATE SET

NOTICE: PERI District 2 Chapter 10 Paulding County will hold their meeting Wednesday, December 2, 2026 at 10:00 am in the Community Room of Paulding Co. Library. Lora Lyons, Director of Paulding County United Way.

All are welcome.

HEAR YE, HEAR YE!

Better yet, forget ye and stop by Antwerp Distillery, 107 Bourbon Street in charming downtown Antwerp Ohio the evening of November 28th for the very alive sounds of the incomparable Jack Schilb, on stage, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m., to regal one and all with his original tunes and classic fan favorites within the ambiance of a true Family Legacy.

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HIGH HEATING BILLS?


Scan for more information

THE HOME ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (HEAP) CAN HELP!

HEAP is a federally funded program to help income-eligible households with winter heating costs. Households at or below 175% of the federal income level (see chart) may receive a credit once per winter heating season towards their primary heating source—electric, natural gas, or bulk fuel.

Three ways to apply until May 31, 2027:
- Online at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov
- Appointment with your local Energy Assistance Provider/Community Action Agency
- Mail in an Energy Assistance application* from www.energyhelp.ohio.gov

** Applications may take up to 12 weeks to process." HEAP benefits start being applied in January. Always sign, date, and provide all required documents to avoid delay.*

2026-2027 175% Income Guidelines

Size of household*	12-Month Limit 175%	30-Day Limit 175%
1	$27,930	$2,295.62
2	$37,870	$3,112.60
3	$47,810	$3,929.59
4	$57,750	$4,746.58
5	$67,690	$5,563.56
6	$77,630	$6,380.55
7	$87,570	$7,197.53

Contact your local Energy Assistance Provider/ Community Action Agency for more details

For more utility assistance information visit: www.occ.ohio.gov/utilityassistance

Office of the Ohio Consumers' Counsel
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419-769-8876