



# TRIBUNE-COURIER

RICHLAND COUNTY'S ONLY LOCALLY-OWNED NEWSPAPER • SINCE 1961

news@tribune-courier.com

02.15.24



## Avita Ontario Hospital chosen to be first stop on the state-wide SOAR Study Tour

Photos and Article  
By Traci Little

Avita Health System will be working with The Ohio State University College of Medicine and Wexner Medical Center to host the first research site for the State of Ohio Adversity and Resilience (SOAR) Study. This is a state-wide initiative to identify the root causes of emotional distress, suicide and drug overdose in Ohio.

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and OSU jointly announced this initiative on Jan. 19. This 20 million dollar study will help identify risk and resiliency factors to improve behavioral health outcomes.

At the West (MRI) entrance of Ontario Hospital on Feb. 9, at 2 pm, there was a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating this wonderful venture.

Vice President of Operations at Avita Health, Kim Winkle, welcomed the large crowd in attendance including Mark Romanchuk, State Representative Marilynn John, Richland County Commissioners Tony Vero, Cliff Mears, and Darrell Banks. Also Mayors Jodie Perry of Mansfield, Steve Schag of Shelby, Teri Brenkus of Bellville, Linda Pitt of Crestline and Randy Hutchinson of Ontario were thanked for attending.

Jerry Morasko, President and CEO at Avita Health thanked Ohio State for choosing Avita as the first stop on this tour. Avita is an independent health system in affiliation with Ohio State. One of the neat things about their partnership is Avita's stroke robots are connected directly with the neurosurgeons at Ohio State to receive critical on the spot diagnosis treatment while patients are experiencing a stroke. It's a wonderful partnership and truly a great relationship.

"Our community health needs assessments in both Crawford and Richland counties have shown a need for mental health, addiction, and suicide awareness and prevention," said Morasko. He is looking forward to the positive outcomes of this study and making a huge impact throughout the state and beyond.

This study was born from a simple lunch conversation when Gov. DeWine asked Dr. K. Luan Phan, chair of OSU's psychiatry and behavioral health department, what could be done in the face of rising rates of mental illness, suicide and increasing deaths related to drug overdose.

Dr. Anthony King said Avita Health System's Ontario hospital is a perfect place to SOAR. An associate professor in The Ohio State University Department

of Psychiatry and Behavioral health and director of the Center for Resilience, King said metro areas like Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton would be easier to include in this massive research project. "North Central Ohio area was already on our map. It's halfway between Columbus and Cleveland," King said.

This groundbreaking and innovative study has been two years in the making, involving the study of 15,000 volunteers from every area of the state. It begins in Richland and Crawford counties with these ribbon cuttings. Surveying 15,000 Ohioans in all 88 counties and in person visits with 1,200 families at rural, suburban and urban sites across the state. The need for statewide representation was one of the non-negotiables for Gov. DeWine.

The vision is that this SOAR study will be a catalyst for future efforts to continue to learn about what Ohioans can do to better manage adversity and develop resilience. The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services is funding the statewide research project with an initial \$20 million grant, approved as part of the state's biennial budget.

(Continued on Page 8)

## Area Agency on Aging will host Spring into Health event

The Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. has announced the upcoming "Spring into Health" event, dedicated to enriching the lives of older adults in the community.

This comprehensive event, scheduled for March 5, from 1-3 pm will offer a diverse range of educational sessions and valuable resources to promote healthy aging.

The event's presentation topics include:

- Wellness: Certified wellness coaches will share the benefits of evidence-based classes including Active Living Every Day, Diabetes Empowerment Education Program, Matter of Balance, Stepping On, and Tai Chi. Attendees will learn how to sign up for these free wellness classes. Volunteer coaching opportunities are also available.

- Nutrition: Greg Brandes, nutritionist, will share how nutritional classes, tailored to older adults, can promote healthy aging, and enhance well-being.

- Solar Eclipse Preparation: Rebecca Owens, director of the Richland County Emergency Management Agency, will share tips on how to stay informed and prepared for the upcoming solar eclipse, with guidance on safety measures and optimal viewing. This segment of the presentation will be streamed from the Area Agency on Aging to various senior centers within our nine-county service area. To learn more about how your county plans to share this portion of the event, please contact your local senior center. Visit <https://www.aaa5ohio.org/resources/senior-centers/> to identify a local senior center.

- Technology: Dennis Fox, Chief Executive Officer of ES Consulting, will share the benefits of embracing and utilizing technology tools, thus empowering older adults to live independent lives.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to explore resource

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# Communities urged to give blood as shortage continues

The American Red Cross urges donors to give blood or platelets now to continue to strengthen the national blood supply this month. The public can book a time to give by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

People of all blood types — especially type O blood donors, the most needed blood group by hospitals — and platelet donors are needed daily to ensure blood products are available for hospitals at a moment's notice.

As February continues, so does the potential for additional weather systems to disrupt blood drives and the ability to provide critical blood products to hospitals. While thousands of donors have answered the call to donate in recent weeks to combat a significant drop in the blood supply, more donors are needed now to ensure the blood supply remains ready for those in need of lifesaving medical procedures.

In thanks for helping, all who come to give in February will receive a \$20 Amazon.com gift card by email. Details are available at RedCrossBlood.org/Heart.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities include:

Wednesday, Feb. 14, from noon to 6 pm, Richland Mall, Ontario; and 1-6 pm, Planktown Country Market, 1921 Free Rd., Shiloh

Thursday, Feb. 15, 7 am to 7 pm, Madison Comprehensive High School, 600 Esley Ln., Madison area; and 8:30 to 2:30 pm, St. Peter's High School, 111 W. First St., Mansfield

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2-7 pm, Lucas Community Center, 252 W. Main St., Lucas

Wednesday, Feb. 21, 7 am to 1 pm, K of C Hall, 208 Vernon Rd., Shelby; and noon to 6 pm, Richland Mall, Ontario

Thursday, Feb. 22, 11 am to 5 pm, Heartland Church, 2505 Lexington Springmill Rd. S., Lexington; and 11 am to 5 pm, Richland Mall, Ontario

Friday, Feb. 23, 8 am to 1 pm, OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital, 335 Glessner Ave., Mansfield; 10 am to 3 pm, YMCA, 750 Scholl Rd., Mansfield.

Wednesday, Feb. 28, noon to 6 pm, Richland Mall, Ontario


The blood drive at Madison Comprehensive High School on Thursday, Feb. 15, will be held in honor of London Hamilton.

London is a Madison student who was diagnosed with Ewing Sarcoma in December 2022. Her tumor was wrapped around her right eleventh rib.

She went through six rounds of chemo before having resection surgery in May 2023 and began radiation in August 2023.

On top of receiving chemo, she's battled multiple infections and specifically neutropenic.

London is currently on the last phase of therapy with only two more rounds of chemotherapy left. Throughout her journey she has had 48 transfusions. Blood donors are very important in the cancer world. The blood drive will be held in the Madison Comprehensive High School Gym, 600 Esley Ln., Mansfield, Thursday, Feb. 15, from 7 am to 7 pm.



## THE ENTERTAINMENT EXAMINER

— By Ian Stumbo —

*The Zone of Interest* is a much talked about World War II/Holocaust film from writer/director Jonathan Glazer. He and the film were recently nominated for several Academy Awards including best picture, director and screenplay.

Rudolf Hoss (Christian Friedel) is the commander of the Auschwitz camp. He decides to build an ideal lifestyle for his wife, Hedwig, (Sandra Huller) and their children right next to the camp, Auschwitz, which is right over the wall of their backyard.

The movie chronicles their lives from visitors coming and going, to Hoss's work in his office to family visiting. Their life is almost upended when Hoss is ordered to move and Hedwig tries to do everything she can to get him to stay in their home.

*The Zone of Interest* is much different than other movies about the Holocaust such as *Schindler's List*, *Life is Beautiful* and *The Pianist*. One of those differences is how it uses sound, which earned a nomination.

Glazer never takes us over the wall, though the audience hears everything from screams to gunfire. A particularly disturbing sequence is when Helga's mother is staying with them, and she sees the glow of fires at night coming through her bedroom window.

Also, Glazer never gives the audience anyone to root for. Nobody in this movie is supposed to be likeable, I believe the intent is to show how these terrible people led their everyday lives fully knowing what atroc-

ities were happening.

Glazer does a terrific job with wide camera angles and shots to show enough of Auschwitz and to let enough light and sound in, so the horrors are affecting.

Much has been said about the last 10 minutes of the movie and it is a side of recent history that is not shown much. Without spoiling it, that is all that will be said.

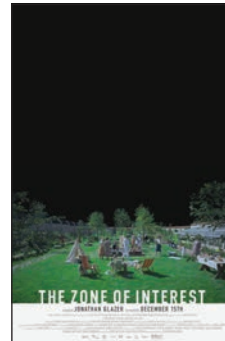
Glazer's other films like *Under the Skin* and *Birth* tend to be very artistic.

Beyond the basic plot I gave, there is not much going on other than following these people through their daily lives. It could almost be a documentary, though not a very effective one.

The movie worked because of its different portrayal of the horrors of the Holocaust and Glazer's filmmaking style (including an almost x-ray view of a young girl who escapes every night leaving apples for the prisoners).

*The Zone of Interest* is a disturbing film that approaches this terrible time in history in a different way, which is appreciated.

Glazer's direction and the sound design are top notch though I wish more had happened as his point of what he was trying to achieve came across pretty early. It's a difficult movie to recommend because I do not know many who would watch it though there are some excellent moments, and I can see why it was nominated for awards.



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# News Briefs

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Ave. West, Mansfield, offers senior boxes on the fourth Tuesday of each month, year 'round. The Greater Cleveland Food Bank has a program called "Senior Boxes" whereby anyone 60+ who falls in the "low income" guidelines can register and then pick up a 30 pound box of non-perishables including two pounds of cheese and a 15 pound box of pre-packaged produce.

Age is a qualification, so those attending should bring a current identification card complete with date of birth and proof of income. Distribution is on the east side of the building between 10:30 am and 12:30 pm to get registered and pick up a box. (Please note time change). There is no cost. Call 419-522-0662 for more information. The next distribution date is Feb. 27.

★

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Richland County will hold its monthly board meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 20, at 5:30 pm at 87 E. First St., Mansfield.

For additional information call 419-774-5811.

★

Six Global Methodist churches in Richland and Ashland counties will hold a joint Ash Wednesday community service Feb. 14 at 7 pm at Faith Church, 1574 Rt. 96 in Ashland (across from Crestview Schools).

★

The Lexington Depot's meal schedule has been released. Meals are \$9 and served at the Lexington Senior Civic Center, 67 E. Main St., Lexington, from 11 am to 1 pm.

For information call 419-884-1676. Meals include Feb. 15, beef stroganoff over skinny noodles; Feb. 20, waldo sandwich with white bean soup; Feb. 22, gravied meatballs served over spaghetti; Feb. 27, cabbage rolls with mashed potatoes; and Feb. 29, pepper steak over rice.

★

The Lexington Area Senior Citizens Inc., invites those 55 and older to attend meetings the third Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am at Der Dutchman, Rt. 96, Bellville. Meals are \$15.

The next meal will be held Feb. 21, and will include broasted chicken. Strutt Your Stuff Dancers will perform. Those attending are asked to wear red.

For information visit [www.lexasc.org](http://www.lexasc.org). Dues are \$10 per year.

★

The Richland County Local Emergency Planning Committee meetings are scheduled for April 24 and July 24 at 3:15 pm at Richland Public Health, 555 Lexington Ave, Mansfield, in the Corley Room. For information contact Richland County EMA 419-774-5686.

★

The 47th Annual Maple Syrup Festival will be held at Malabar Farm Saturdays and Sundays, March, 2, 3, 9 and 10, from 12-4 pm. The event is free and open to the public.

★

A free Shelby community meal will be held at Awake Church, 3616 St. Rt. 39., Shelby, on the second Thursday of each month, from 6-7 pm. Dates are March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14 and Dec. 12.

For information visit [www.awakeshelby.com](http://www.awakeshelby.com) or call 419-342-4636.

★

A spaghetti dinner fundraiser is planned for Charles White on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 4 pm at the Eastbrook Center (Madison Athletic Booster Club Bingo Hall), 720 5th Ave., Mansfield.

Cost is \$10 for dinner that includes pasta, salad, bread, dessert and drink. There will be a gun raffle, 50/50, silent auction and live auction. Charles White recently suffered from a spinal cord injury. He is a husband, father, veteran, retired sheriff officer and a Lexington Youth Coach. For information or to donate call 419-571-4010.

★

An Empty Bowl fundraising event will be held Saturday, Feb. 24, from 4-7 pm at Mansfield 1st EPC, 399 S. Trimble Rd., Mansfield.

Cost is \$10 for bottomless soup. Those attending will receive a decorative bowl made by local students free with dinner purchase.

This event is a fundraiser for and in partnership with Discovery School, Mansfield Christian School, the Lexington School District and My Village Ministries. Students from each school will be creating or decorating a variety of bowls. The soups served will be made by SC Event Center. Soups will include chicken noodle, beef vegetable and tomato. Crackers, bread and a variety of drinks will also be served. For more information call 419-756-7066.

★

Crestview High School, 1575 St. Rt. 96, Ashland, will host the annual Road Apple Run 5K on Saturday, March 2. The race will begin at 10 am and proceeds go to the school's running programs.

The race is an out and back 5K race on a scenic country road in northern Richland County. Bordered by several peaceful Amish farms, the course is mostly flat with some slight upgrades.

For information or to register visit [https://registration.midohiorm.com/events/2024-road-apple-run-5k-road-race-12202023124?fbclid=IwAR1\\_MhGbYTkXfp1G1Q-1Yk51npySFnU9IORAqgDMX\\_RlAt3sFhCnBbaO8g](https://registration.midohiorm.com/events/2024-road-apple-run-5k-road-race-12202023124?fbclid=IwAR1_MhGbYTkXfp1G1Q-1Yk51npySFnU9IORAqgDMX_RlAt3sFhCnBbaO8g).

★

A Think Spring & Thaw Out Event will be held at the Richland County Fairgrounds on March 16 and 17, from 10 am to 6 pm. Vendors will be in the Arts & Crafts Building, and possibly some outside depending on the weather. There will also be food available from a food and donut truck. Email [deniseflores7423@gmail.com](mailto:deniseflores7423@gmail.com) for more information.

★

The Sonshine Band will perform at the 9:30 am worship services at Trinity Grace Fellowship, 1592 Grace St., Mansfield, on Feb. 25 and April 7. Members of the Sonshine Band are Gary Baumberger, Brian Payne, Wayne Magee and Thom Richards.

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, Feb. 24 and 25. Acceptable items include steel and aluminum cans, crushed milk jugs, detergent bottles, plastic bottles with number 1 or 2 on the bottom, broken down cardboard, all papers included with the newspaper but no other magazines or paper. Please remove caps from bottles and rinse all containers well.

★

The Fun Center Chordsmen Barbershop Chorus will host a show celebrating the chapter's 50 years on Saturday, March 23, at 3 pm.

The event will be held at Lexington High School, 103 Clever Ln, Lexington. This show, entitled "50 Years of Fun," celebrates the chordsmen's 50th year as an active BHS chapter.

(Continued on Page 5)

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## Mobility Management transitions to Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging

In a collaborative move aimed to address the growing transportation needs for older adults and individuals with disabilities in Richland County, Mobility Management has been transitioned from the Richland County Regional Planning Commission to the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging (AAA5).

Jotika Shetty, executive director of Richland County Regional Planning Commission, expressed the significance of this transition, "This move just makes good sense. Our longstanding partnership with Area Agency on Aging and its transportation program has significantly impacted the lives of seniors and individuals with disabilities."

Since its inception in 1996, Mobility Management has played a pivotal role in coordinating transportation needs for Richland County through the Agency Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC), now called Richland Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC). RTAC, led by the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging Mobility Management team, is a committee made up of representatives of government entities as well as private and public social service agencies that are currently providing some form of transportation to disabled, elderly or otherwise disadvantaged individuals. The goal of the committee is to coordinate existing routes and vehicles to bring efficiency to the roster of transportation services that are available within the county.

By facilitating communication between consumers, social service agencies, and contracted transportation providers, the Mobility Management team connects clients to organizations that provide transportation resources.

Shetty emphasized that positioning the program within the Area Agency on Aging would allow for the greatest potential for growth and innovation in the future. Lyndsie Martin, Mobility Management Transportation Coordinator, has seamlessly transitioned to the Area Agency on Aging team, ensuring continuity for clients, providers, and community partners.

Duana Patton, chief executive officer of the Area Agency on Aging said, "We are excited to take this program, which has had a positive impact in our community over the years, and position it for future growth." The program will not only continue linking seniors with existing transportation options and county resources but will also focus on forging new partnerships and solutions to address gaps and barriers that impact safe, reliable, and affordable transportation."

"Continued collaboration with valued partners, such as the Regional Planning Commission, will be key in ensuring the program's ongoing success."

For more information visit <https://www.aaa5ohio.org/services/mobility-management/> or call 567-247-6483.

# Church Directory

### Clay Memorial Lutheran Church

1601 Amoy East Rd., Mansfield  
419-747-6882

Pastor Carol Kilgore  
Sunday School 9:15 am  
Sunday Worship 10:30 am

### Clear Fork Alliance Church

1008 State Route 97, Bellville  
419-886-4333 • [www.clearforkalliance.org](http://www.clearforkalliance.org)  
Rev. Matt Merendino

Rev. Mike Stine, Associate Pastor  
9 am Sunday School • 10 am Sunday Worship  
Sunday Evening 6 pm Home Groups  
Monday Men's Group 7:30 pm  
Wednesday evenings: 6:45 pm Prayer Meeting  
6:30-8 pm TeamKID and Youth Group  
Wednesday Ladies Bible Study 6:30-8 pm

### Community Bible Church

1043 Springmill St., Mansfield  
567-560-8011

[www.DiscoverCommunity.org](http://www.DiscoverCommunity.org)  
Pastor Sam Belsterling  
10:30 am Sunday Worship  
Live stream at <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityBibleChurchMansfield>

### First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

200 West Third St., Mansfield  
419-524-4813 • [mansfield1stcc1833@gmail.com](mailto:mansfield1stcc1833@gmail.com)  
Rev. Gregory Bibler  
Office Hours: Tu., W., Th. 9 am to 1 pm  
10:30 am Sunday Worship  
Christian Builders, Sunday, 9:30 am  
[www.FirstChristianChurchMansfield.com](http://www.FirstChristianChurchMansfield.com)  
FB: FirstChristianChurch,Mansfield,Ohio

### First Congregational Church

640 Millsboro Rd., Mansfield  
419-756-3046 • [www.mansfieldfcc.com](http://www.mansfieldfcc.com)

Pastor Brad Bunn  
8:30 am Chapel • 10:30 am Sanctuary  
Sunday School 10:30 am

### First English Lutheran Church

53 Park Avenue West, Mansfield  
419-522-0662 • [www.felc-mansfield.org](http://www.felc-mansfield.org)

Interim Pastor Lisa Peterson  
9 am Sunday School • 10 am Sunday Worship  
Call about Prayer Groups, Small Groups, Bible Studies, Book Clubs, Pub Theology, Community Meals, Free Produce distribution and Senior Boxes.

### Hope Lutheran Church

(Formerly St. Paul & St. Timothy)  
2010 Park Avenue West, Mansfield  
419-529-4351 • [www.lutheranhope.org](http://www.lutheranhope.org)

Pastor Jonathan Stuft  
9:30 am Sunday Worship  
10 am Thursday Bible Study  
Free Breakfast 2nd Saturdays 9 am  
Free Dinner 4th Sundays 5 pm

### Lexington Presbyterian Church

35 Church St. West, Lexington  
419-884-1330  
Pastor Denny Nezrick  
10:30 am Sunday Worship  
<https://www.facebook.com/Lexington-Presbyterian-Church-117768414915815>

### Mansfield 1st EPC

399 Trimble Rd., Mansfield  
419-756-7066 • [www.mansfield1st.com](http://www.mansfield1st.com)  
Rev. Joseph Yerger  
9 am Adult & Youth Sunday School  
10 am Sunday Worship  
ADA Accessible Nursery  
and Children's Programming Available

### Mansfield Baptist Temple

752 N. Stewart Rd., Mansfield  
419-589-5413 • [www.mbt.org](http://www.mbt.org)  
Pastor Rob Kurtz  
9:30 am Sunday School  
10:30 am & 5:30 pm Sunday Worship  
7 pm Wednesday Service

### Ontario United Methodist Church

3540 Park Avenue West., Ontario  
419-529-4345 • [ontarioumc.com](http://ontarioumc.com)  
Pastor Christine Bell  
10:15 am Sunday Worship  
10:15 am Kingdom Kids

### St. John's United Church of Christ

68 Park Avenue East, Mansfield  
419-522-2813 • [www.stjohnsmansfield.org](http://www.stjohnsmansfield.org)  
Pastor Faith Prioretti  
10 am Sunday Worship

### Trinity Grace Fellowship

1592 Grace St., Mansfield  
419-589-5890 • [trinitygracefellowship.org](http://trinitygracefellowship.org)  
Pastor Larry Carnes  
9:30 am Sunday Worship  
11 am Sunday School  
Bible Study Mondays 2 pm

### G & M Body & Paint Shop

1689 West Fourth St., Ontario  
419-529-2747

### Wappner Funeral Home

Mansfield • Ontario • Ashland  
419-522-5211



## Richland County Farmers Share Breakfast is February 24 in Shelby

Richland County Farm Bureau will celebrate agriculture, local farmers and our rural community with its Farmers Share Breakfast on Saturday, Feb. 24. Serving is from 7-10 am in the Shelby High School Cafeteria, 1 Whippet Way, Shelby.

The free-will donation meal includes pancakes, fresh whole hog sausage, eggs, orange juice, milk and coffee.

Money donated at the breakfast goes to food pantries in Richland County, in honor of FFA chapters. No reservations are needed.

The breakfast has donated nearly \$19,000 to area food banks and the Harmony House in the past 16 years.

"Farmers remain committed to producing safe and healthy food for our communities, and we share with consumers many of the same concerns about putting nutritious meals on the table on a tight budget," said Brian Alt, Richland County Farm Bureau breakfast chair. "By inviting our community to our Farmers Share Breakfast, we hope to connect with them and provide a better understanding of the origins of the food on their plates."

Follow Richland County Farm Bureau on Facebook and bookmark [richland.ofbf.org](http://richland.ofbf.org) for details on events and programs throughout the year.

Ohio Farm Bureau's mission is working together for Ohio farmers to advance agriculture and strengthen our communities. Learn more at [ohiofarmbureau.org](http://ohiofarmbureau.org).



## • News Briefs

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Tickets will be available at the door the day of the show with no presale or online sales. Credit/debit cards and cash will be accepted. Cost is \$15 for adults and \$5 for students.

★

The City of Ontario will host Summer Concerts at Marshall Park this summer. The concert admission is free and those attending are encouraged to bring a blanket or lawn chairs. Concerts are at the Marshall Park Band Shell from 6-8 pm. The schedule includes June 11, Conne; June 25, Red Ball Jets; July 9, David Perry; July 23, Oolong Gurus; Aug. 13, Soul Town Live; and Aug. 27, Atermath.

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 25 Church St., Bellville, will welcome James Seamus Dillard to speak on "Love and love deities and customs from around the world" at 10:30 am on Sunday Feb. 18. For more information visit [www.allsoulsuuohio.org](http://www.allsoulsuuohio.org).

★

To submit a news brief item send an email with information to [news@tribune-courier.com](mailto:news@tribune-courier.com). To advertise in the T-C, email Traci at [tribune.courier.traci@gmail.com](mailto:tribune.courier.traci@gmail.com)

### Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

- Billy Allen Sexton Jr., January 29
- Wilbur Eugene Hockensmith, February 1
- John Edward Steele Jr, February 1
- Mary Lou McCollister, February 3
- Susie Ann Tolliver, February 3
- Jeffery Withers, February 3
- Betty "Betty Jo" Joan Snow, February 4
- Ronald Howard Sowash, February 5
- Joyce E. Stevens, February 5
- Alice Mae Hellinger, February 8
- Debby Kay Sharp, February 8

View Full Obituaries at [www.dignitymemorial.com](http://www.dignitymemorial.com)

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## NOTICE TO TAXPAYERS

### Wednesday, March 6, 2024

WILL BE THE LAST DAY FOR PAYMENT OF **FIRST HALF 2023** REAL ESTATE TAX WITHOUT PENALTY AND INTEREST

The County Treasurer is not legally responsible for your failure to receive proper bills — Sec. 323.13 R.C. Failure to receive a tax bill does not void interest and penalty — Sec. 323.08.

The following financial institutions and their branches are authorized agencies for receiving **FIRST HALF 2023** real estate tax payments.

MECHANICS SAVINGS BANK  
CIVISTA BANK, SHELBY, OHIO  
Night Depository at Treasurer's Office

**BART W. HAMILTON**  
**RICHLAND COUNTY TREASURER**

PHONE 419-774-5622  
Office Hours: 8 am to 4 pm MONDAY THRU FRIDAY

# Poll workers needed for Richland County March primary

The Richland County Board of Elections needs additional poll workers for the March 19, primary election. Therefore, the board has scheduled a class for new precinct election officials (poll workers) Monday, Feb. 26, at 6 pm at the Longview Center, 1495 W. Longview Ave., in the upper-level classroom.

Those attending should enter through the front entrance from the main front parking area, the classroom will be to the right, past the elevators. The class will consist of an overview of the electoral process and should last approximately two hours. A brief presentation will demonstrate how to set up the voting equipment. Attendees will receive \$30 with their check for working the polls and attending this class.

## •Agency to host Spring into Health

*(Continued from Front Page)*

tables from participating organizations, in addition to 211 and Catholic Charities. Sign-ups will be available for the classes mentioned.

As a special highlight, "Spring into Health" will feature door prizes and giveaways, adding a fun and rewarding element to this educational experience.

This free event is open to individuals aged 60 and older. The programs and classes presented at this event are available on a first come, first served basis for older adults over the age of 60, meeting specific eligibility criteria.

This event emphasizes the Area Agency on Aging's commitment to fostering healthy aging, empowering older adults with the knowledge and resources they need for a fulfilling and vibrant future.

The event will be host at the Area Agency on Aging Hawkins Conference Center in the Magnolia Room, 2131 Park Avenue West, Ontario.

RSVPs are not required. For more information call 419-524-4144 or visit the Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/aaa5ohio](http://www.facebook.com/aaa5ohio).

Seventeen-year-olds are eligible to serve as precinct election officials. It is a way for them to learn about the electoral process, serve the community and get paid. Most schools will excuse students from school if the board of elections office provides a letter. The experience can be added to college or work applications.

Most new poll workers will be assigned. Teh board tries to place workers as near as possible to their home area, but sometimes it's necessary to ask them to travel to another part of the county.

Each polling precinct is staffed by one precinct election official - presiding judge (PEO-PJ), who is considered to be the lead poll worker, one precinct election official - presiding assistant (PEO-PA), who must accompany the PJ back to the office with the equipment and ballots after the polls close, and two precinct election officials-clerks (PEO-Clerk).

Vote Centers, which are polling places with more than one precinct, will also have a VLM (voting location manager) to oversee the entire location. Usually, the more experienced workers are assigned as a VLM or PJ. An equal number of poll workers from each party must be assigned to each precinct.

VLMs are paid \$190, presiding judges \$180, presiding assistants \$155 and clerks \$145, plus their training compensation. No taxes, social security, or other deductions are taken out of these checks.

For information call 419-774-5530.

## Ontario High School juniors will take required ACT on March 12

Ontario High School juniors will be required to take the ACT test on Tuesday, March 12. The test will be administered by Ontario Local Schools at no cost.

All Ontario and Pioneer juniors including online and CCP students should report to Ontario High School both March 6 and 12.

On Wednesday, March 6, students will take the ACT pre-test.

OHS students should report to first period for attendance and then move to the commons area. Pioneer and CCP juniors should report to the OHS commons before 8 am. Students will be sent back to class around 9:15 am. A bus will be provided for Pioneer students.

On Tuesday, March 12, students will take the ACT. All juniors should follow the same schedule as Wednesday, gathering in the commons. Buses will depart to the Richland County Fairgrounds at 8:15 am. Buses will return to OHS around 12:45 pm.

Pizza will be provided in the commons by OHS Student Council. Juniors will be released for the remainder of the day.

Anyone that needs to ride the bus home must remain in the commons for the duration of the day.

Smart phone, smart watches and fitness bands are not allowed during the test and pre-test. For information contact the high school office.

## Richland County Commissioners release "State of the County" video

The Richland County Board of Commissioners have released the State of the County video. This video highlights the 2023 year in review and includes presentations from Richland County Commissioners Darrell Banks, Tony Vero and Cliff Mears, as well as Richland County Administrator Andrew Keller and Sheriff Steve Sheldon.

The video is the second installment in a series of three Richland County branding videos and shines a spotlight on many of the county's notable projects, community investments and the county's financial position. The commissioners plan to release a State of the County video on an annual basis as a part of the board's emphasis on transparency and local government accountability.

The video can be viewed at [https://youtu.be/\\_VKBo5wPkpY](https://youtu.be/_VKBo5wPkpY)

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**Trainer Girl's Tips**  
 By Mátiece Thomas  
 Happy Valentines week everyone! I thought it would be fitting to talk about heart health this week. It is so important to take care of our body, to keep it strong and healthy.

Our heart health is the most important because so many things can affect it and we want it to be working at its best. Exercise, what we eat and what we drink are all factors in keeping your heart healthy and strong.

Did you know that aerobic exercise is one of the best types of exercise for your heart? You want to try and get in 30 minutes a day/5 days a week.

Some good examples include taking a brisk walk, running, swimming, cycling, jumping rope and playing a sport. These heart pumping exercises will

help you build a healthier heart. It is also important to reduce stress when you can and get seven to eight hours of rest.

Stress and lack of sleep can put a strain on your heart, I know sometimes its easier said then done, but do your best.

Foods that promote heart health are fish high in omega 3 fatty acids, lean meats, eggs, nuts and seeds.

A warm cup of green tea or matcha tea are also amazing beverages to add to your diet. They have more healing properties for your body than just for your heart. They boost your immune system, help with mood and lower cholesterol, to name a few.

Its important to eat lean and green, remove sugary drinks, add green tea and matcha, take time to exercise and, last but not least, take time to relax and rest. These are a few tips that can help you build a stronger heart this Valentines. Make yourself a priority you will be glad you did!

Follow me at Instagram-5pts-fitness\_trainergirl for nutrition and workout tips.



*kimmy's cucina*  
 By Kim Sterry

**TRACY'S CHICKEN AND ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP**

**Ingredients**

- Butternut squash, cubed
- Chicken broth, 64 ounces
- 3 carrots
- 3 celery sticks
- medium onion
- cloves of garlic
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1 cup white wine
- chicken breasts
- jalapeno pepper
- 2 tsp chopped sage, fresh

**Instructions**

Peel butternut squash and cube. Cut carrots, celery and onion into approximately same size as squash. Toss squash, carrots, celery and onions with olive oil and put on a baking sheet in a 350 degree oven and roast until cooked thoroughly. While the veggies are roasting cut up the chicken and cover with salt and pepper. At this point you can fry the chicken up in a pan or place on baking sheet and put in oven to cook with the veggies. Roast the jalapeno and remove skin and chop, set aside When veggies are done, in a soup pot, add broth, wine, chicken and veggies, bring to a soft boil, lower heat and slowly add cream to desired consistency. Add ialapenos and sage and serve. (You can keep this meatless, use vegetable broth and leave out the chicken).

*LIKE Kimmy's Cucina on Facebook & Instagram*



Photo by Damon Callis

**Day Trippin' With Damon** – Hemlock Falls is located in the Mo-hican State Park. For informatio visit <https://richlandcountyparks.com/hemlock-falls/>





Photos By Traci Little

**Kim Winkle, Vice President of Operations, Avita Health System**



**Andrew M. Thomas, MD, MBA, Wolfe Foundation Chief Clinical Officer, Senior Associate Vice President for Health Sciences, Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center**



**Scott Langenecker, Ph.D. Professor and Vice Chair of Research in Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health, The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center**

## • Avita Ontario Hospital chosen to be first stop on tour

*(Continued from Front Page)*

Andrew Thomas, Chief Clinical Officer at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center has been with Ohio State for 33 years this coming summer. He spoke about being in Richland County was like coming home for him, as he has personal and family connections with the area. He spoke about the wonderful collaboration with Avita Health and the greater mission of the university to provide a future workforce for the state of Ohio. “We look forward to having not just clinical interactions together with Avita, but in this case, now research and education happening here as well!”

Scott Langenecker, Ph.D., who is the professor and Vice Chair of Research in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Health at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center took a moment of silence remembering those who have lost someone to suicide and overdose.

“I stand here amazed and humbled. Today is a day of hope and joy! I’m reminded of the great need that we have to care better for Ohioans. It doesn’t mean we haven’t been trying; we’ve been trying really hard,” said Langenecker.

He spoke about this being a humble recognition that we have a lot more to do and the gratefulness of our governor and representatives in the State of Ohio for being bold enough to lead in this way.

“To lead in this way is part of the DNA of Ohio, so thank you all for being part of that and joining us here today for the ribbon cutting at our first mobile solar site!”

SOAR will be a fact finding mission with the heart to actively lis-

ten and learn. With the amazing tools available, including inside the semitrailer containing a 1.5 Tesla Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scanner, which will help researchers collect data from the problem-solving and emotion-processing areas of the brain. This will allow them to learn more about how they are connected. With this more specific research MRI will help researchers better understand how blood flow goes to different parts of the brain when we do different types of cognitive tasks or feel different emotions.

“We have the ability to do electrophysiology and DNA testing. “We can look at stress markers and questionnaires and really do a deep dive into what mental health is,” said Langenecker.

He explained that they will be focusing on the family unit, because family is at the core of how we function in life. “We want to understand how resilience emerges in families and how people address risk in the context of family and community.”

The ribbon cutting took place outside in front of THE MIND RESEARCH NETWORK, a mobile Imaging System.

What an exciting time for Avita Ontario to host this ribbon cutting ceremony, welcoming the SOAR Study to their site!

For more information about the SOAR Study, visit <https://soarstudies.org/>. Families and individuals are invited to request participation by calling 614-688-9537 or by emailing [SOARstudies@osumc.edu](mailto:SOARstudies@osumc.edu).

## Lintern to present free concert

Paul Lintern will present a 90-minute concert of “Altered” songs as a prelude to the Sixth Annual March of Prayer series of worship services, Thursday, Feb. 29, at 6 pm at Southside Christian Church, 2055 Middle-Bellville, Mansfield.

These songs reflect nearly 50 years of performing popular songs with lyrics adjusted to embrace faith in Jesus Christ. The mix of holy humor has been a hallmark for Lintern. The concert is free and open to all, and will kick-off the 31 evenings of prayer service that will begin the next night and continue until Easter Sunday.

Songs will include altered selections from Billy Joel, Elvis, Smokey Robinson, Woody Guthrie, The Beach Boys, Glenn Miller, The Drifters, Harry Chapin and Frank Sinatra.

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**Mallory Bishop, Tonya Bishop, Susan Stover, Nicole Lenhart and Hayley Schaffer**

## Residents encouraged to welcome foreign exchange students

World Heritage International Student Exchange Program (WH), a non-profit, public benefit organization, is seeking local families to host foreign exchange students this coming school year.

World Heritage students come from a variety of countries worldwide: Italy, Denmark, Spain, France, Germany, Ukraine, Japan and Australia, to name just a few. They are between the ages of 15 and 18 years, and they are enthusiastic and excited to experience American culture, family life, school, sports, etc. They also love to share their own culture and language with their host families, who welcome the students into their home, not as a guest, but as a family member, giving everyone involved a rich cultural experience. Host families may be single parents, couples and single persons.

The exchange students have pocket money for personal expenses and full health, accident and liability insurance. World Heritage students are carefully selected based upon academics and personality, and host families choose their student from different backgrounds, countries and personal interests.

World Heritage also offers qualified American students the opportunity to learn another language and culture by spending a school year, semester or a summer with a host family in another country.

If interested in hosting an exchange student or becoming an exchange student abroad, call Debra at 1-800-888-9040, visit [www.world-heritage.org](http://www.world-heritage.org) or send an email to [info@world-heritage.org](mailto:info@world-heritage.org) to request more information or start the application process.

Students are eager to learn about their American host family, so begin the process of welcoming your new son or daughter today. The memories and the relationship you create with your exchange student will stay with you forever.

## Ribbon cutting ceremony celebrates Whispering Willow Way opening

**Photos and Article By Traci Little**

It was a beautiful, sunny day in downtown Shelby as many gathered to celebrate the opening of Whispering Willow Way. This warm and cozy farmhouse chic boutique offers clothing, purses, hats, jewelry, repurposed furniture, candles, organic body products, personalized items, greeting cards, freeze-dried candies and more.

Owner Tonya Bishop loves to inspire others with decorating ideas and special touches for their home.

"There's a little something for everyone," said Bishop.

The afternoon was filled with community connections, door prizes, appetizers and a shop full of discounted treasures to explore.

Commissioners Darrell Banks, Cliff Mears and Tony Vero helped celebrate the opening. Shelby's Main Street is growing with thriving new businesses.

Mayor Steve Schag congratulated Bishop and spoke of her inspiring backstory. Usually behind every person with an entrepreneurial spirit is a unique and special story.

Bishop has goals for expansion, renovation, and a facelift on the horizon. Her first store was Mallory's Treasures named after her daughter Mallory. After three years of running the store, she closed in 2018 after the death of her father.

In 2023, she decided to open Whispering Willow Way following two other devastating tragedies where she lost her mother and sister within two weeks of each other.

"What caused me to close one door, gave me the energy and strength to open another," said Bishop. She's so grateful to be doing what she truly loves.

Bishop is a teacher by day and store owner by evening. She loves to craft and repurpose furniture and has also enjoyed bringing in new vendors. She especially loves working with wood and has some great ideas for leading fun woodworking classes.

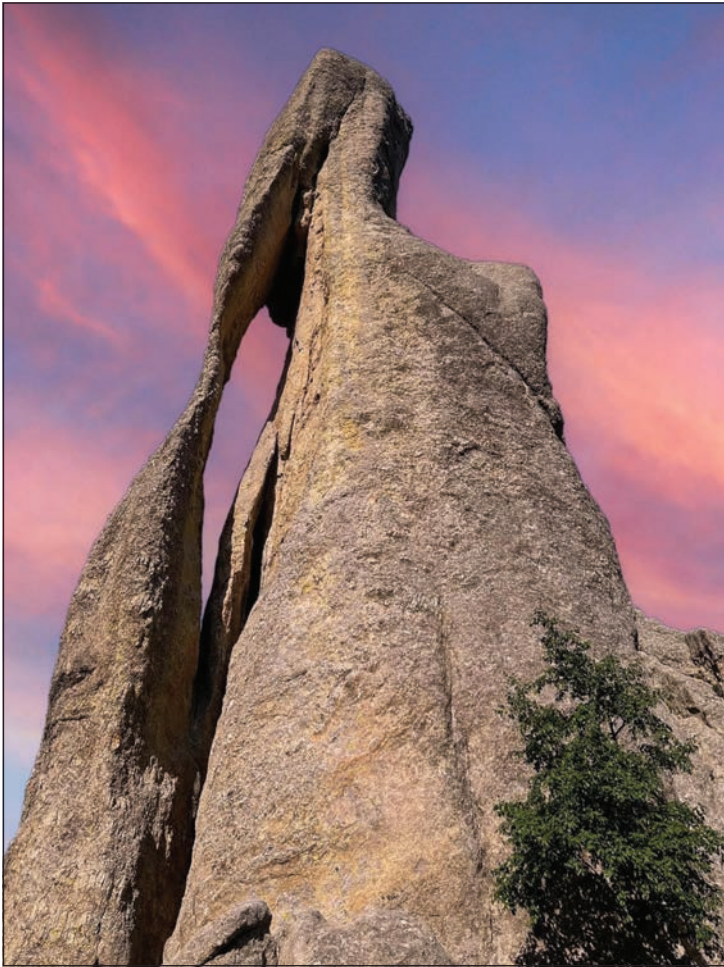
Whispering Willow Way is named after Bishop's 1-year-old spoiled Basset who loves to come into the shop.

Bishop loves anything with country music vibes so you're going to see a lot of Shackets, country song lyrics on shirts, Shabby Chic Farmhouse décor and furniture. Her favorite season to decorate for is hands down, Christmas!

Economic Development Manager for the Richland Chamber in Shelby, Jessica Gribben, said it has been fun to watch East Main Street fill up with fun little shops. She spoke about it becoming more of a destination.

Member Services Manager for the Richland Area Chamber and Economic Development, Jennifer Wagner, said she already spotted a few things she wanted to purchase. She leads the membership program, overseeing the benefit plans and helps foster community partnerships.

Whispering Willow Way's hours are 2 to 6 pm Thursday and Friday, 10 am to 5 pm Saturday, and 10 am to 2 pm on Sunday.



The Needles Eye, Custer State Park, South Dakota  
Photo By Mark Shutt

## Second-look open house planned at Pioneer for area sophomores

Pioneer Career and Technology Center announced its second-look open house is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 15, from 6–7:30 pm for all area sophomores.

College-NOW Business and College-NOW Engineering will host at the Kehoe Center in Shelby. Additionally, Pioneer Performing Arts will showcase its offerings at Theatre 166 in downtown Mansfield, 166 Park Ave. W. All other programs will be at Pioneer’s main campus in Shelby.

Pioneer’s labs are equipped to help students earn industry certifications and college credits while offering a hands-on education experience. Numerous College Credit Plus classes are available, enabling students to graduate with additional college credits.

Students at Pioneer Career and Technology Center actively participate in clubs, activities, and sports at their home schools, as well as engage in activities and clubs at Pioneer. These include Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), Student Council, National Technical Honor Society (NTHS), Business Professionals of America (BPA), Future Farmers of America (FFA), SkillsUSA and more.

Applications for enrollment are currently being accepted online at [go2pioneer.com](http://go2pioneer.com), with the priority deadline set for Feb. 29. Students attending the open house will have the opportunity to apply on-site.

Pioneer Career and Technology Center has been providing career-technical education to high school juniors and seniors for 55 years. Serving over 1,100 students across 35 Career Tech Programs and partnering with 14 schools, Pioneer also offers adult education programs. Visit [www.go2pioneer.com](http://www.go2pioneer.com) or call 419-347-7744 for more information.

## Hospice of Western Reserve announces Management Services Agreement with Hospice of NCO

The Hospice of North Central Ohio (HNCO) Board of Directors approved a Letter of Intent to enter into a Management Services Agreement with Hospice of the Western Reserve (HWR) for 90 days on Jan. 30. HW will begin a due diligence process with HNCO in preparation for the full transition in the coming months. This merger comes as a result of increased competition within the HNCO service area, economic challenges and a need to stabilize and ultimately grow the organization.

The two agencies have collaborated closely for several years and have a shared mission of providing comprehensive, community based non-profit hospice and palliative care. Hospice of the Western Reserve brings over 45 years of experience in end-of-life care and will expand their 16-county service area through Hospice of North Central Ohio to include Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Knox, Morrow, Richland, and Wayne counties. “Hospice of the Western Reserve is one of the leading nonprofit hospice agencies in the nation and share our values for patient and family care,” says Mary Knowlton, President of Hospice of North Central Ohio Board of Directors. “The board, including our founder Ruth, believe this to be the best opportunity to ensure the communities we serve continue to have access to the highest level of care.”

Joan Hanson MSN, RN, CHPCA, Director of Palliative Care at Hospice of the Western Reserve, will assume the role of Interim Executive Director of Hospice of North Central Ohio and brings nearly 30 years of experience in palliative and hospice care. Prior to joining HR, Joan served as Executive Director at New Life Hospice where she was responsible for leading an \$11 million hospice program comprised of over eighty full time staff members as well as providing the proper structure to deliver the highest quality care to patients and families. “This is an extraordinary opportunity to lead an organization committed to compassionate care and support,” says Joan. “I look forward to working alongside the dedicated team at Hospice of North Central Ohio and further building on their longstanding legacy in the community.” Joan has been twice honored with the prestigious Leader of Excellence Award from Mercy Health and under her visionary leadership, Hospice of the Western Reserve was awarded the American Hospital Association’s Circle of Life Award. Additionally, she has implemented several advanced illness management programs including the At Home Support program.

This union strengthens both organizations’ commitment to provide exceptional care and support across Northern Ohio and uphold the highest standards of compassion, excellence, and innovation in end-of-life care. “This strategic alliance signifies not just a collaboration of organizations, but a dedication to enhancing the landscape of exceptional end-of-life care,” says Bill Finn, President and CEO of Hospice of the Western Reserve. “Together, we embark on a journey of continued support, ensuring that every individual and their loved ones continue to receive the highest caliber of care.”



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## Ohio House passes legislation regarding ethanol tax credit

The Ohio House of Representatives passed House Bill 324, legislation that creates a temporary non-refundable tax credit on sales of E15 and higher blended biofuels of 5 cents per gallon. The measure is spearheaded by State Representatives Riordan McClain (R-Upper Sandusky) and Roy Klopfenstein (R-Haviland).

The credit will be available to all businesses selling fuel containing at least 15% ethanol (E15). The tax credit will sunset when either \$10 million is credited or four years have passed.

"E15 is not a new product, but since it entered the market, its availability has been suppressed," said McClain. "It is our hope by offering this temporary tax credit, the availability of this Ohio-produced, cost-saving fuel will increase across the state."

The Buckeye State is in the top 10 states of ethanol production, but most of the fuel produced in Ohio is exported to other states, as only 60 stations in Ohio offer the fuel compared to more than 2,300 stations nationwide.

"Ohio is home to seven ethanol plants, one of which is in my district where it provides great paying jobs for more than 40 people and produces 90 million gallons of bioethanol each year," said Klopfenstein. "Ethanol is three to 10 cents cheaper per gallon than traditional fuel, and nine out of 10 cars can use it."

House Bill 324 passed with strong bipartisan support and moves to the Ohio Senate for further consideration.

## Voter registration deadline nearing for primary election

The deadline to register to vote or change an address or name for the March 19, primary election is Tuesday, Feb. 20. The Richland County Board of Elections office will be open that evening until 9 pm.

The office is located at 1495 W. Longview Ave, Suite 101. After 4 pm, visitors must use the entrance at the lower-level back parking area at the southwest corner of the building.

Qualifications for registering to vote include that they must be either a native U. S. citizen or a naturalized citizen of the U.S.; must be a resident of Richland County and Ohio 30 days before an election; and must be a minimum of 18 years of age on or before the date of the general election on Nov. 5, 2024.

Registered voters who have moved or changed their name must notify the Board office in writing or in person. Voters currently registered in Ohio may change their address online at [VoteOhio.gov](http://VoteOhio.gov) but must do so by the Feb. 20 deadline. Online registration is also now available at [VoteOhio.gov](http://VoteOhio.gov)

In addition to the board of elections office, citizens may register or complete a change of address/name at the following locations in Richland County: any library branch, all city and village hall offices, The Bureau of Motor Vehicles office, The Department of Human Services, The Richland County Courthouse (recorder or treasurer offices) and all area high school offices

Registration is available at [www.boe.ohio.gov/richland](http://www.boe.ohio.gov/richland) or requested by mail.

Call 419-774-5530 to have a form sent by mail.

## ARTTALK events will be held every first Wednesday for local artists

Mansfield Arts and Culture Sector has announced ARTTALK, a monthly networking event for artists of all ages, mediums and skill levels to meet, interact, share ideas and build community.

The location will change month by month and will be held the first Wednesday of each month.

February's event will be held in the community art studio inside MOSAIC church, 296 Park Avenue West on Wednesday, Feb. 7, from 6-8 pm.

ARTTALK is presented by the Mansfield Arts and Culture Sector as a way to empower artists by building the foundations for a diverse and thriving art scene in Mansfield/Richland County.



## Kingwood Center decorated with orchids during Winter's Interlude

Winter's Interlude — an orchid presentation — is being held at Kingwood Center Gardens.

Nearly 250 orchids, along with air plants and tropical plants, decorate the intimate space of the Orangery in the Display Greenhouse. On display now, until March 9, Winter's Interlude displays both common and exotic orchid species, shipped to Kingwood from as far as Hawaii.

Kingwood Gardener, MacKenzie Cole, who created the display, described her design, "This design is meant to combine natural elements with the existing architecture to highlight the beautiful brick arches and spacious vaulted ceiling as well as the unique beauty found in each plant."

"Orchids, air plants, moss, and other tropical plants are hung from trees or mounted to vertical spaces to reflect their natural habit as epiphytes."

Most orchids are epiphytes, which means they grow on the surface of another plant, such as trees. MacKenzie sees Winter's Interlude as a respite from the cold, bleak winter months, when people are longing for sunshine and green spaces.

There is no additional cost beyond general garden admission to see Winter's Interlude at Kingwood Center Gardens.

Garden admission is \$8 for non-members, free for children 12 and under, and free for Kingwood members.

Learn more at [Kingwoodcenter.org](http://Kingwoodcenter.org) or call 419-522-0211.





**RICHLAND COUNTY CHILDREN SERVICES** Executive Director Nikki Harless displays items collected during this year's Valentine's Day card drive.

## RCCS, Lions collect over 8,000 items for Valentine drive

Richland County Children Services (RCCS) and the Mansfield United Lions Club's Valentine Card Drive has surpassed last year's total of 4,700 items with this year's collection of 8,156 items. This marks the second year for the project that was created to show foster youths love with Valentine's Day cards.

The Mansfield United Lions Club and RCCS collected Valentine's cards, candy, books, and dolls for children in foster care ages 0 - 6, 7-12 and 13-18, from Jan. 10 through Feb. 9. Cards could be handmade, or store brought.

"The community came together to make a difference and Richland County Children Services is thankful for the support of this project. In Ohio there are more than 16,000 youths in foster care and unfortunately many of them do not have the chance to be part of Valentine exchanges. The Valentine's Day Card Project gives the community an opportunity to show children in foster care that they are loved, appreciated and not alone," said Nikki Harless, Richland County Children Services, Executive Director.

"The outpouring of love and support was wonderful! We received cards from Stinger Harley - Davidson in Medina, Ohio, handmade

dolls from The Giving Doll in Norton, Ohio and Golden Corral restaurant in Ontario collected cards from patrons to support the drive. People from all over Richland County and out of state once again donated cards including families, schools, churches, businesses, public officials, colleges, and correctional institutions," said Brigitte Coles, Richland County Children Services, Community Engagement Specialist. "RCCS is especially grateful for the support of our Mayor Jodie Perry and the City of Mansfield Parks Department for encouraging all our residents to participate in this project and make this an extra special Valentine's Day for our foster youth."

Richland County Children Services (RCCS) mission is to lead our community in assuring the safety, well-being, and permanency of children at risk of abuse and neglect.

RCCS encourages all individuals to invest in the lives of children and to provide them with unconditional love, support, guidance, and every available resource to ensure their health and well-being.

You can make a difference in a child's life! If you are interested in becoming a foster parent, contact Richland County Children Services at 419-774-4100 or go to [richlandcountychildrenservices.org](http://richlandcountychildrenservices.org).

## Absentee and early voting begins February 21 in Richland County

Absentee and early voting for the March 19, primary election will commence Wednesday, Feb. 21, either by mail or in person at the Richland County Board of Elections, 1495 W. Longview Ave., in the lower level classroom.

The closest entrance is in the back of the Longview Center by the "Vote Here" sign and flag. Those who enter through the front entrance must take the stairs or elevator down to the lower level. Those who have requested absentee ballots by mail will have their ballot mailed out starting Feb. 21.

Absentee applications to vote by mail are available at <https://www.boe.ohio.gov/richland/> or by calling the office at 419-774-5530 to have a request form mailed.

Early voting schedule:

Feb. 21 through March 8, 8 am to 5 pm, each weekday

Saturday, March 9, 8 am to 4 pm

March 11, 13, 14 and 15, 7:30 am to 7:30 pm, each weekday

Tuesday, March 12, 7:30 am to 8:30 pm (deadline to request an absentee ballot by mail)

Saturday, March 16, 8 am to 4 pm

Sunday, March 17, 1-5 pm, early voting ends

On election day, March 19, polls are open from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm. Early voting ends Sunday, March 17 at 5 pm. There will be no early voting on Monday March 18.

All precincts in Richland County will be open. Voters in the City

of Mansfield, Village of Butler, Cass Township, Jefferson Township, Troy Township, Lexington School District, may request a Republican, Democrat or an Issues Only ballot.

The remaining Richland County voters may request a Republican or Democrat ballot.

The only procedure available under Ohio Election Laws to change a party affiliation is to request the party's ballot in a primary. It does not matter which party a voter is currently affiliated with in their voter registration records. The voter simply states to the poll worker which ballot they want to cast for that election.

To view a ballot online visit <https://www.boe.ohio.gov/richland/candidate-voter-tools/> and voter lookup search, enter last and first name and submit. On the right side, click sample ballots and choose which ballot style to view.

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Grade 5



Grade 4



Grade 3



Grade 3



Grade 3

**ONTARIO STINGEL** students in grades 3,4 and 5 received all As for the second quarter grading period.

## News Briefs in Education

Olivia Workman of Lexington earned dean's list honors at The University of Tampa for the fall 2023 semester. Workman is a freshman majoring in Applied Sociology BA. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.75 or higher to be eligible for the dean's list.



Ontario High School freshman orientation will be held Thursday, Feb. 8, from 7-8 pm in the high school cafeteria.

The night will begin with a presentation in the cafeteria, followed by the opportunity to interact and discuss student opportunities over the next four years in academics, co-curriculars and extra curriculars.

Parents are encouraged to review the 2024-'25 Course Offering Guide that students should have brought home recently.

# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## Crestview leaves Madison in defeat to Lady Rams

Photos and Article By Kris Leiter

Madison girls Coach Mike Leeper has an incredible 40 years of high school coaching experience.

As the Crestview Lady Cougars visited Ram territory on Jan. 15, it was wondered what bag of tricks Leeper and the Lady Rams would have in their arsenal.

As the first quarter tip-off commenced, the two teams tussled back and forth and by the time the clock showed 4:45, the game was tied 6-6.

Shortly thereafter, Lady Ram, senior Chloe Ebling cracked the safe and put the Rams on top 8-6 at 3:42.

At 1:42, the Rams threw in another nine points and spread the lead to 15-6, with a big 3-pointer by senior Aliva Ash.

At 1:22, Crestview fouled Ash and she hit her second free throw to put Madison on top by 10 points, and they weren't even out of the first quarter yet! Madison was soaring with a ten point lead at 16-6!

At the end of the first quarter, Madison held the pace nicely with an 18-8 lead.

With a 10-point lead, and 40 years of basketball notes in his play-book, Coach Leeper would have some more items cooking up.

Quarter number two kicked-off with four steals, full court pressure and a scoring run of 9-6.

Leeper and the gang added to the recipe with contributions by sophomore Morgan Cook, adding four back-to-back baskets (say that 10 times fast) at 6:10 and 5:55.

Let's not forget about senior Natalee Back with a BIG 3 and another 2 bagger at 3:15 and 3:00, respectively on the clock.

Madison would now hold a comfortable lead of 29-16 at the end of the first half. Not a bad for a day at the office thus far.

As the third quarter started, so would sophomore Morgan Cook. She would stay in the mix with four more points, and midway through the third quarter, kept the lead at a steady 35-18.

As Leeper's ship was now sailing strong, he would continue to

have the Rams ship sail with full steam ahead and continue to score.

The Rams increased the tally with senior Chloe Ebling adding to the mix with another four points as the quarter closed.

The score showed 42-18, at the end of three quarters.

Remember, scoring runs can be good or bad, depending on which team you are on, and in this case, being the fourth quarter, Coach Leeper was a proud papa as his Lady Rams would go on another incredible run of 15-7.

Big kudos to Chloe Ebling, that name should ring a bell by now, as she would claim six of the 15 points of the scoring run and surging the Rams score to healthy victory of 55-27!

The leading Lady Rams scorers were Chloe Ebling in double figures with 16 points, Natalee Back and Morgan Cook with 8 tallies a piece, as well as Maddie Berry with 7 points, including a 3-pointer!

Also, big hats off the Lady Rams defense by keeping the Lady Cougars under 10 points in every single quarter.



Lady Ram Natalee Back (2) was a leading scorer with eight points



Madison's Sophie Lowe (30) and Crestview's Makenzie Spoerr (1) and Regan Brooky (22)



Madison's Addy Farris (40)

## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

### Mansfield Senior girls win hard fought battle with Shelby

By Kris Leiter

The Lady Whippets (10-3, as of Jan. 16) are playing some phenomenal basketball this season. Albeit, they would be tangling with the incredible Mansfield Senior Girls (13-1, as of Jan. 16).

Shelby came into the contest on the road, and anytime you play on the road, it can always be challenging.

As the first quarter began, so would Shelby, by dropping the first bucket at 7:00. Not a bad time to start the festivities at 2-0 for the Whippets.

However, and you know when the word "however" is used, it may not be a good thing?

As the next 30 seconds rolled by, Mansfield's aggressive defense started to show.

The TYgers would make three steals to capitalize with five quick points before you could blink an eye.

At the 3:24 mark, Mansfield gained the lead 11-2. Had Shelby met the eye of Tyger?

As the clock continued, so would the TYgers defense with traps, press and steals, and put more points onto the scoreboard. At the end of the first quarter, the TYGers had the upper edge at 13-4.

As the second quarter commenced, the Tygers were just getting warmed up and Shelby would get into foul trouble. Mansfield took advantage and kept the tallies coming. At the end of the second quarter, Shelby was trailing by almost half, 27-15.

Halftime in any sport can be a time to regroup and Shelby's Natalie Lantz is no stranger to this scenario.

Lantz said, "We did a better job of taking care of the ball the second half. They (Mansfield) are so athletic, we were not going to out jump them. We were lobbing a number of times and it wasn't working, so we had to adjust. I love the girls' fight. This team makes me happy."

As the third quarter continued, the halftime speech would reap benefits. Scoring came from junior Eve Schwemely who would drain back-to-back 3-pointers at 3:30 and 3:20!

At the :29 second mark, Shelby showed that they came to play and didn't intend to go back to Shelby empty-handed!

Mansfield fouled Schwemely and she sunk both free throws, putting the Whippets within a mere four points as the third quarter closed out. By the third quarter horn, the board read 33-29, with the Whippets not too far off the pace.

The fourth quarter would have Shelby continuing their hustle and "never-give-up" attitude. Junior Tasaya Smith added four points to the mix, two points each at 6:35 and 4:40. At 4:40, the TYgers were only leading by two points, 38-36! What a comeback!

Could Shelby gain the lead? Remember how Coach Lantz "loves the fight in the girls?" It was definitely showing! You could feel the emotion in the gymnasium.

Midway through fourth quarter, the Tygers were relentlessly stealing the ball, as they had been the entire game. When something is working for you, keep doing it and Coach El Meeks was doing just that. I noted an amazing 18 steals from the Tygers! When you convert those into points, it reaped benefits.

As the remaining minutes ticked by, Shelby would maintain a 2 to 6 point spread, and within the last minute, there were a total of five-fouls committed by both teams. With :10 seconds left, Keirsten Bradley dropped her two BIG free throws, putting the Whippets within three points 45-42.

As the seconds diminished, Shelby fouled TYger Kyeona Myers and sent her to the foul line for two shots.

With 8 seconds showing, Myers dropped her second free throw, expanding the lead by four points, 46-42, the TYGers leading with :05 seconds left. Shelby's Maggie Bogner then dropped a last second bucket for two points! The score was now 46-44, with TYgers leading, and with ball in hand, they would let the clock expire and end this very exciting game.

Leading the Shelby scorers with almost half of Shelby's total points and in double figures was Eve Schwemely with an incredible

18 points. Charlei Niese had 9 points and Sophi Long had 6.

Mansfield Senior scorers were Monetta Hilory with 11 points, Kyeana Myers with 9 and Adazianna (Dazl) Manns with 7.

### Lucas girls fall to Galion

By Kris Leiter

I always like to give credit where credit is due and the Lucas Lady Cubs deserve some praise for their performance on Jan. 17.

Coach Kathy Grover and her staff are relentless with their passion. I have covered a few of their games in recent weeks and, despite some injuries, they still find ways to improve.

On this particular night, they would battle the Galion Tigers on the road.

As the game commenced, the Cubs were ready right out of the gate, with good solid defense, keeping a close eye on the Tigers. It wasn't until 6:40 in the first quarter that the Tigers would score with two big 3-pointers, at 6:40 and 3:36.

It was then time for Lucas to shine as two big points came from Arbor LyBarger at 2:40. Galion was leading 6-2.

At 2:08 in the first quarter, Galion fouled Lady Cub junior Olivia Brown and she sank her first of two foul shots to close the gap to 3 points, 6-3.

At 1:28, Olivia Brown was just getting started with the fireworks with another 2-point bomb! Closing the gap to one point, 6-5, Galion leading. It was time for another Cub to join the scoring party as sophomore Katie Griffey contributed a gift of two points at :40 seconds left. As the first quarter closed, the Cubs were only trailing by four points with the score at 11-7.

As the second quarter opened, the Cubs would stay within 6 to 10 points until 5:30 on the clock.

Lady Cub Griffey threw in another two points at 4:45.

Galion continued to score through the remainder of the quarter, and at halftime was leading 28-13.

Entering the third quarter, Galion would continue to score and open the lead to 40-13 at :50 on the third quarter clock.

At :30 seconds, Lady Cub sophomore Allyson Arnold joined in mix with two points, 40-15, Galion.

As the fourth quarter continued, Galion got into foul trouble and sent Olivia Brown to the free throw line to connect on both shots.

Galion was leading 43-17, with 6:08 in the fourth quarter.

At 3:40, it would be Griffey back at it again with another two points. At 2:47, Galion committed a myriad of six fouls. Olivia Brown took advantage of the opportunity and went 4-6 from the line and also throwing in some points was Keara Ammons, hitting a free throw as well.

At the final horn, Galion would end the contest 48-25. Again, hats off to the Lady Cubs for a strong effort!

Leading the scoring for the Lady Cubs was Olivia Brown in double figures with 11 points and an incredible seven points on 11 attempts from the charity stripe! Also in the scoring mix was Katie Griffey with six points on the night!



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# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**CLEAR FORK VS RIVER VALLEY VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · FEBRUARY 8**  
**RIVER VALLEY WINS 49-45 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**





# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**CLEAR FORK VS RIVER VALLEY JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL  
CLEAR FORK WINS 35-34 · FEBRUARY 8 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**ONTARIO VS GALION VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL  
WARRIORS WIN 67-29 · FEBRUARY 6 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



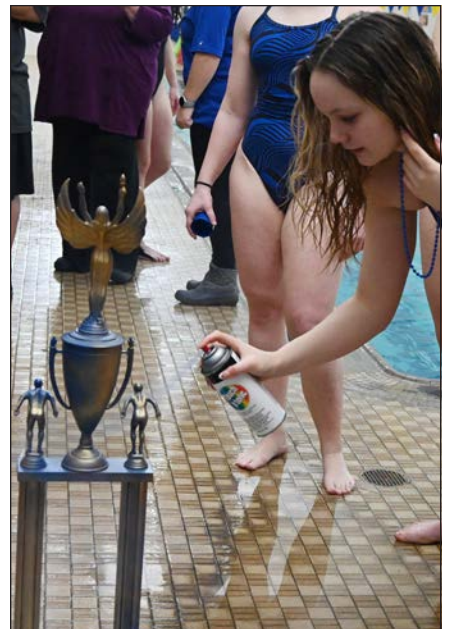
# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**ONTARIO VS GALION JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL  
WARRIORS WIN 48-40 · FEBRUARY 6 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## Ontario's Teammate Blue and Gold Swim Meet



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## ONTARIO VS CLEAR FORK WRESTLING • WARRIORS WIN



# CLASSIFIEDS

# ONTARIO DRUG FREE SENIOR FRIDAY

### SEEKING DESIGN SERVICES

The Ontario Local School District Board of Education is seeking the professional design services for its project consisting of the construction of a softball field and creating an interior cosmetic design plan for current buildings. Firms interested in submitting a statement of qualifications may obtain additional instructions for doing so by emailing Keith Strickler, superintendent at [strickler.keith@olsohio.org](mailto:strickler.keith@olsohio.org) or by going to the District website at <https://www.ontarioschools.org>. Statements of Qualification are due on Feb. 19, 2024 at 4 pm.

Keith Strickler  
Ontario Local Schools  
City of Ontario, Ohio  
(T-C 2-8, 15-'24) 19L

### LEGAL NOTICE

The following is a succinct summary of the legislation adopted by the Council of the City of Ontario, at their regular meeting held on February 7, 2024.

The complete text of this Ordinance may be viewed and copies obtained at the Office of the Clerk of Council, Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, during regular business hours.

ORDINANCE NO. 24-02 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 11 – PLANNING AND ZONING CODE OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO CODIFIED ORDINANCES.

RESOLUTION NO. 24-02 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO PERFORM BRIDGE REPAIR ON HOME ROAD OVER US-30, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Cathy VanAuker  
Clerk of Council  
City of Ontario, Ohio  
(T-C 2-15, 22, '24) 28L



## CACY offers lock boxes

Community Action for Capable Youth (CACY) offers the Store it Safe Richland Program's lock boxes for households struggling with mental health and self harming concerns.

Safe storage of lethal means (firearms, sharp objects, medications) protects and reduces risk of injury and can save lives. Contact the CACY office at 419-774-5683 or [andersont@cacyohio.com](mailto:andersont@cacyohio.com) for more details on the program.

The local crisis helpline can be reached at 419-522-4357.

CACY information and resources can be found at <https://cacyohio.org>



## BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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