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news@tribune-courier.com 02.05.26

SHELBY MAYOR STEVE SCHAG speaks during the 2026 Mayoral Vision Panel on Jan. 28. Also pictured are Village of Plymouth Mayor Cassaundra Fryman, City of Mansfield Mayor Jodie Perry, City of Ontario Mayor Josh Bradley, Village of Lucas Mayor Todd Hall and Village of Lexington Mayor Bob Jarvis.

Mayoral Vision Panel 2026: Where Big Plans Meet Local Reality

Photos and Article By Traci Little

MANSFIELD — If you want a snapshot of where Richland County is headed in 2026, Wednesday's Mayoral Vision Panel offered just that in one room: mayors from across the county discussing growth, traffic, infrastructure needs, and the funding realities that will shape what actually gets done.

Hosted by the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development in collaboration with Leadership Unlimited, the Jan. 28 panel brought together village and city leaders at the Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center for a wide-ranging conversation about projects already underway, priorities on the horizon, and how residents can stay engaged in shaping their communities.

Moderated by Leah Gesouras, the discussion carried a consistent theme: progress happens when communities plan ahead, collaborate regionally, and stay realistic about what growth requires — especially as development accelerates along key corridors.

MANSFIELD ALTRUSA CLUB has two "Little Free Libraries" filled with books and magazines for all ages. One is located on Park Avenue West by the Methodist Church, across from the county building, and the other is at the Third Street Clinic. Mansfield City Schools instructor Greg Morris' Construction and Building Trades class built the libraries. In 2025, over 500 books were shared with the community each month. Altrusa member Candy Brenner is pictured with a book donated by Good Morning America.

Several mayors pointed to the Ohio State Route 97 and Interstate 71 interchange area as a prime example of why "roads first" matters. Bellville Mayor Teri Brenkus said the YMCA of North Central Ohio's soccer complex near the interchange is expected to bring significant weekend traffic, prompting coordination with regional planners and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Her comments echoed across the panel: new destinations are exciting, but they also require intersection planning, turning lanes, signage, and long-term maintenance capacity — challenges that weigh heavily on smaller municipalities.

Village priorities: infrastructure, restraint, and readiness

In Bellville, Brenkus said 2026 will be a year of measured progress. The YMCA's athletic fields are expected to be completed by the end of the year, and work continues at Osco Park in partnership with Richland County Parks. She offered special thanks to the Gorman family for donating land not only for the dog park, but also for Osco Park's expansion.

At the same time, Brenkus said the village is intentionally taking a step back financially.

"There's not a lot of big projects for the village," she said. "We're cleaning up roadways, taking care of infrastructure, and making sure our debt is covered."

With ongoing discussion about eliminating property taxes statewide, Brenkus emphasized fiscal responsibility. Bellville operates on a roughly $3.3 million budget, including about $1 million for police services, and could lose an estimated $700,000 annually if property taxes disappear.

"We're tight already," she said. "Losing that would be a huge hit."

Still, she highlighted positive momentum, noting Bellville's designation as an AARP-friendly community. With support from the Area Agency on Aging, the village is prioritizing walkability and programming for a growing number of retirees relocating from the Columbus area.

In Butler, Mayor Wesley Dingus outlined significant utility work already in motion, including replacement of a water line installed in 1938, installation of 27 new fire hydrants, and rehabilitation of the village's final main sewer line.

If money were no object, Dingus said he would accelerate investment in a resort-style project aimed at making Butler a destination within Richland County. He expressed support for the idea of eliminating property taxes — while acknowledging that funding would still have to come from somewhere.

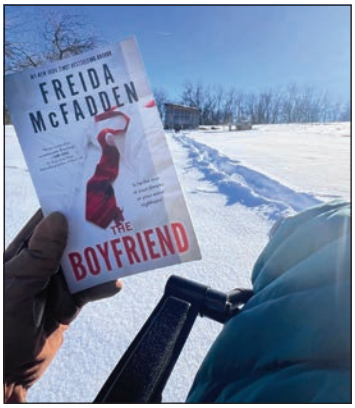
"The money is going to be taken one way or another," Dingus said, suggesting alternatives such as higher sales taxes.

He also pointed to Butler's appeal for residents seeking space and

(Continued on Page 8)

Lost In A Book

A Book Review
By Amanda Belczak



SNOWY, SUNNY DAYS help get me through the winter. I grabbed my lawn chair, a hot cup of tea abd my newest read The Boyfriend by Freida McFadden.

Book sale is this weekend

The Mansfield/Richland County Public Library (MRCPL) Evergreen Bookshop will be open for the monthly Friends' Used Book Sale on Friday, Feb. 6, from noon to 4 pm and Saturday, Feb. 7, from 10 am to 3 pm.

A preview sale will be held for Friends of the Library members only on Thursday, Feb. 5, from noon to 4 pm. Memberships may be purchased at the preview sale ($3 per year for individuals).

Materials (adult, teen and juvenile items) are library discards and public donations. The bookshop is stocked with "new to the store" items each month. All proceeds from the monthly sales sponsor enrichment activities provided by the main library and its eight branches.

The Evergreen Bookshop is staffed exclusively by volunteers in downtown Mansfield at 37 N. Walnut St. (near the corner of W. Third St. and N. Walnut St., next to the main library).

For information contact the Evergreen Bookshop 419-526-4652 or visit www.facebook.com/EvergreenBookshopFOL.

The Entertainment Examiner

— By Ian Stumbo —

Director Sam Raimi has been making films for a long time as diverse as the *Evil Dead* trilogy and the Tobey Maguire Spider-Man movies. His new release *Send Help* has a great combination of horror and comedic elements.

Rachel McAdams stars in and gives a great performance as Linda Liddie, a bright, ambitious employee trying to move up the corporate ladder.

When finding out she got passed over for a promotion from her new younger boss Bradley (Dylan O'Brien), she confronts him and he offers a seat on their flight overseas. Soon after taking off, the plane goes down and only Linda and Bradley survive on a deserted island.

Both employee and boss have to work together and later they learn one of them might be in danger from the other.

Raimi combines great elements of his signature violence and some gore to a movie that is also laugh out loud funny at times.

McAdams does such great work as the resoruceful Liddie who is addicted to the show Survivor and even auditioned for it.

Send Help is a well done movie with some interesting twists that forces the audience to take both sides in terms of who to trust and what their motivations are.

McAdams and O'Brien play off each other really well and Raimi does great once again in the directors chair.

4th Annual Valentine's Day Card drive yields great results

The 4th Annual Valentine's Day Card drive for children in foster care has officially come to an end, leaving behind a powerful reminder of the community's compassion and generosity.

Over the past several weeks, residents, schools and local groups poured their creativity into crafting more than 6,500 handmade cards, and store brought cards each filled with messages of love, encouragement and hope.

Organized by Richland County Children Services (RCCS), in collaboration with the Mansfield United Lions Club, the initiative invited residents, schools, and organizations from across the area to take part in spreading joy and encouragement to children in foster care. Participants of all ages contributed in unique and heartfelt ways—from preschoolers drawing cheerful hearts and colorful scenes, to students crafting elaborate handmade designs, to adults writing thoughtful, uplifting notes filled with words of hope and compassion, ensuring that each card carried a personal touch that reflected the community's care and commitment.

The cards will be delivered to foster children across the county in time for Valentine's Day, along with small treats or tokens of appreciation.

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.

Modern Woodmen Youth Club

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Serving Ontario, Lexington, Madison, Bellville and Butler Communities in Madison, Mifflin, Springfield, Troy, Washington and Jefferson Townships

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News Briefs

A special meeting of the Ontario Board of Education will be held in the Ontario High School Library, 467 Shelby-Ontario Rd., Ontario on Tuesday, Feb. 17, at 6 pm for a work session with Rockmill Financial to discuss the district's future financial plan and policy.

The Ontario Board of Education 2026 regular meeting dates will be held Feb. 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, Aug. 11, Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10 and Dec. 8. All meetings will be held in the Ontario High School Library, 467 Shelby-Ontario Rd., Ontario at 7 pm.

★

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. 97, Bellville. Cost is $17 for the meal, with an additional $2 for pie.

The next meal will be Feb. 18, and will include chicken. The Strut Your Stuff dancers will perform and those attending are encouraged to wear red.

For information visit the Facebook page at Lexington Area Senior Citizens (LASC). Dues are $10 per year.

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Ave. West, Mansfield, will be celebrating Fastnacht (Fat Tuesday) on Tuesday, Feb. 17 beginning at 5 pm. Music will be provided by Damian Boyd's Redemption Jazz Band. Everyone is welcome to attend "Pancakes and Jazz" free to the community.

The church will celebrate Ash Wednesday, (the beginning of the holy and penitential season of Lent) on Feb. 18, with a soup supper at 6 pm and Holy Communion/Imposition of Ashes at 7 pm. All are encouraged and welcome. The following Wednesdays in Lent, the church will host "Eat and Teach" gatherings from 6–7:30 pm. For information call 419-522-0662.

★

The Taylortown Community Church Blessing Closet & Food Pantry recently opened and is offering free clothing and food for those in need. Open Mondays, 9 am to 2 pm, as well as every third Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm, the closet is located at the church, 2656 Taylortown Rd., Shelby. Church volunteers also serve a free hot meal every third Thursday from 5:30–6:30 pm with the next being Jan. 15.

There are no income or residency requirements. All are welcome.

Those wishing to donate can drop-off items during open hours or call or text Lyndi Oakley 419-814-0372 or Tonja Barnett 419-571-3846 to set up a time outside of normal hours.

The biggest needs are non perishable food, coats, hats, gloves and kids clothing. Food is distributed quickly and will probably always be the greatest need. 100% of all donations go to filling the closet and pantry. Follow on Facebook at Taylortown Community Church Blessing Closet.

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist of Bellville, 25 Church St., Bellville, will welcome Colleen Rice on Sunday, Feb. 8, at 10:30 am. The subject will be "From Harm to Healing: How Communities Can Prevent Violence Before it Begins." For information visit www.allsoulsuuohio.org.

★

The City of Ontario meeting schedule includes caucus at 6:15 pm on Feb. 4, followed by an economic committee meeting at 5:30 pm and council at 7 pm; the civil service commission on Feb. 11 at 1 pm, followed by the planning commission at 4 pm; and the parks and finance committee on Feb. 18, at 5:30 pm; followed by caucus at 6:15 pm and council at 7 pm.

The Clerk of Council's office supports the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Those who need special accommodations can call 48 hours prior to meeting time at 419-529-6714.

★

First Congregational Church, 640 Millsboro Rd., Mansfield, will host its annual pancake day on Tuesday, Feb. 17, from 4:30–7 pm. The Church Life Committee hosts the event in Blymyer Hall by donation only. All proceeds from the event will benefit Richard and Susan Schuller's 37-year-old daughter seeking medical treatment in Houston. She is fighting for her life and insurance will not cover any of the expense of treatment. Gluten free pancakes will be available upon request.

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, Feb. 28 and March 1. 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.

★

Richland County Mobility Management hosts Mobility Steps at the Ontario Center (previously Richland Mall) between 10 am and noon on the first and third Wednesday of every month (excluding holidays).

Anyone that submits their steps at the walks is entered into a drawing for a $10 gift card.

A special walking event will be held April 29, from 10 am to noon on the OSU-M campus, 1760 University Dr., Mansfield.

The walk starts at the campus recreation center and will be an easy walk through the campus while learning about local programs and services from the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging and Richland Mobility Management. No registration is required.

In the event of inclement weather, the walk will be held inside the recreation center. For information call Randy at 567-247-6483.

★

A Vietnam Wall, Korean War Memorial and WWII Memorial display will be at Freer Field, Ashland, Aug. 6–9.

The 13th Annual Veteran Appreciation Day Event will be Saturday, Aug. 8, at Freer Field, 1301 Park St., Ashland. The event is sponsored by Ashland County Veterans Appreciation Committee. For information visit www.acvad.org.

★

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

Mansfield churches unite for city-wide March of Prayer

By Traci Little

MANSFIELD — A growing movement of unity is taking shape across Mansfield this March as churches from across the city come together for the March of Prayer, a monthlong, citywide initiative centered on prayer, revival, and collaboration.

The March of Prayer is one of the first major efforts under Godsfield, a newly formed nonprofit created to help put "feet to the vision" of prayer for Mansfield — often referred to as Godsfield — by unifying local churches under the name of Jesus. The organization is led by a rotating board made up of leaders from various kingdom-minded congregations and ministries throughout the city.

"The heart behind Godsfield is not to elevate a single church, denomination, or brand, but to answer Jesus' prayer in John 17 — that His followers would be brought into complete unity so the world would know and believe in Him," said Executive Director Jessica Wilging.

"Our desire is to see revival begin in our individual hearts and homes and then overflow into our neighborhoods and community," organizers shared. "We believe prayer and unity are essential to seeing our city healed and restored."

Throughout the month of March, 31 different churches will host one night each, welcoming believers from across the city to gather in prayer. While each evening will reflect the unique expression and culture of the host church, all nights share the same overarching theme: Revival in Our City.

"The beauty of the body of Christ is that we are not all meant to look the same," organizers noted. "Just as a hand looks different from an eye or a foot, each church brings something unique — with Christ as the head."

That spirit of unity has been embraced by churches across Mansfield.

"When I arrived in Mansfield back in 2019, I quickly learned that Mansfield is Godsfield," said Dale Patrick of Mansfield Alliance Church. "Our church has made it a priority to participate in the March of Prayer as an act of unity in the body of Christ. More unites the Church of the Lord Jesus than divides us."

For Tina Yarger of Avenue Church, the March of Prayer is about spiritual growth through togetherness.

"March of Prayer is bigger than any one of us," Yarger said. "It's about becoming the unified body of Christ. As we grow in unity, we grow in maturity — and as we mature, we learn to love one another more fully. It's through this love that others recognize us as true followers of Jesus."

Raymond Cochran Jr. of Oasis of Love echoed that call simply and boldly, "It's time to come together, tear down walls, forget differences, and pray."

Momentum for the March of Prayer has been building since December, when seven Mansfield churches participated in consecutive revival services called Fan the Flame. That experience left a lasting impact.

"After participating in those seven revival services, we were wrecked — in a great way," said Dink Porter of Open Bible Church. "We're ready for 31 more days of that. Let's let go and let God do what He wants to do."

The March of Prayer will conclude on March 31 with a collaborative worship gathering hosted by The Welcome Home Fest, a partner of Godsfield. The location for that final night will be announced as

(Continued on Page 5)

Church Directory

All Souls Unitarian Universalist
25 Church St., Bellville
419-886-3497 • www.allsoulsuuohio.org
10:30 am Service and Sunday School
Adult RE Book Club (quarterly)

First Congregational Church
640 Millsboro Rd., Mansfield
419-756-3046 • www.mansfieldfcc.com
Pastor Brad Bunn
8:30 am Chapel • 10:30 am Sanctuary
10:30 am Sunday School (nursery–high school)
10 am Monday Morning Bible Study

Lexington Church of the Cross
236 Otterbein Dr., Lexington
419-884-2150 • Churchofthecrosslex.com
Pastor-Rev. Dr. Edna Stahl
Sunday Worship 9:30 am
Junior Church for 10 and under • Wesley Class 10:45
5th Sunday of the month-Do Something Sunday AA, Girl Scouts, Yoga, Knotty Ladies and Bible Study.

Ontario United Methodist Church
3540 Park Avenue West., Ontario
419-529-4345 • ontarioumc.com
Rev. J.P. Snyder
9:30 am Grace & Eggs
11 am Sunday Worship and Kingdom Kids

St. John's United Church of Christ
2010 Park Avenue West, Mansfield
(At Hope Lutheran Next to Drug Mart)
419-522-2813 • www.stjohnsmansfield.org
contact@stjohnmansfield.org
Pastor Faith Proietti • 11 am Sunday Worship
Office hours: Mon–Fri 9 am to 1 pm
AA Meetings M & F 10 am & noon;
Wed. noon Brown Bag and Sat. 6 pm

Trinity Grace Fellowship
1592 Grace St., Mansfield
419-589-5890 • 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

MARCH of PRAYER 2026 LOCATIONS

1- Freedom Church
2- Grace Fellowship
3- Holy Trinity Lutheran
4- Journey Life
5- TBD
6- Fusion Lex
7- First English Lutheran
8- Fusion Madison
9- TBD
10- Kingdom Grace Fellowship
11- Oasis of Love
12- The ARC
13- The Way (at Freedom Ridge)
14- Foursquare Gospel Church
15- Potter's House
16- Mansfield Alliance Church
17- TBD
18- Avenue Church
19- The River Church
20- Belmont Community
21- First UMC/Jesus Outreach
22- Open Bible
23- Latter Rain
24- Paradise
25- Abundant Life
26- TBD
27- Gracepoint Lexington
28- TBD
29- MIMA
30- Southside Christian
31- Welcome Home Fest

FOR UPDATES VISIT QR CODE
www.godsfield.org
facebook.com/godsfieldmansfield

•Mansfield churches unite for city-wide March of Prayer

(Continued from Page 4)

plans are finalized. A full, updated calendar of host churches and locations is available online.

Beyond March, organizers say the unity formed through Godsfield is already bearing fruit. Monthly Brown Bag Lunches have resumed, bringing pastors and ministry leaders together on the fourth Thursday of each month to continue building relationships and encouraging collaboration.

Looking ahead, additional citywide efforts are already in motion, including the National Day of Prayer Parade on May 7, followed by a large community worship gathering known as the Festival of Hope. The Festival is planned for mid-summer in the Heart of the city, looking to draw 12,000 people.

"We believe the Church — not one single church, but the Church together — can be part of the solution to many of the challenges our county faces," organizers shared. "When we combine our efforts, resources, and time, we can serve Mansfield more effectively and reflect the love of Christ to our city."

Those interested in learning more, participating, or staying up to date on upcoming events can visit www.godsfield.org or follow Godsfield Mansfield at facebook.com/godsfieldmansfield.

20th Annual Road Apple Run is March 7

The 20th Annual Road Apple Run 5K Road Race will be held Saturday, March 7, at Crestview Schools.

The Road Apple Run will be an out and back 5K race on a scenic country road in northern Richland County. Bordered by several Amish farms, the course is mostly flat with some slight upgrades. The biggest challenge will be avoiding the 'exhaust' from the frequent travel of the horse drawn vehicles.

The entry fee is $25 and pre-registration by Feb. 20 will guarantee an event t-shirt. Race day registration begins at 8:30 am in the commons area of Crestview High School. The race begins at 10 am.

Online and printed registration forms can be found at https://sites.google.com/site/roadapple5k/

First and second place will be awarded in each male and female age class. Classe are 10 and under, 11–12, 13–15, 16–18, 19–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69 and 70 and older.

Crestview High School is located at 1575 St. Rt. 96, Ashland.

All proceeds will support the school's cross country and track teams. For information contact Amy McFarland at 419-895-1700 ext. 18105 or roadapplerun@gmail.com. Savannah Lions Club will be offering a breakfast, payable as a donation.

ELIANA FITTANTE, oboist and a junior at Ontario High School, was a featured soloist with the Cleveland Orchestra Youth Orchestra in a concert at Severance Hall in Cleveland as part of the Martin Luther King Day of Music on Jan. 19. She earned the honor to perform the Bellini Oboe Concerto by being awarded second place in their concerto competition. In addition to COYO, she is also a member of the Mansfield Symphony Youth Orchestra, the Ashland Community Band, the Ashland University Concert Band and Ontario High School Band. She studies oboe with Carol Bernhardt and Frank Rosenwein and piano with Dr. Michael Benson. She is the daughter of Melissa Fittante. Eliana is pictured with Carol Bernhardt.

Photo By Mark Shutt

Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

Angel Gregory Thompson Jr., January 11
Rick Lee Worner, January 23
Raymond Orlando Baker, January 24
Emma Denise Chester, January 24
Suzanne Helen Guehring-Maurer, January 24
Frances Pearl Granger, January 26
Estella Mae Stansberry, January 26
Michael Robert Kern, January 27
Samuel Louis Romagnoli, January 28
Christina "Chrissy" Rae Walter, January 30

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Winter's Interlude blooming at Kingwood Center Gardens

Photos and Article By Traci Little

As winter's chill lingers across north-central Ohio, a welcome burst of color and life emerged last week inside the greenhouses at Kingwood Center Gardens. Winter's Interlude – An Orchid Experience officially opened to the public on Saturday, Jan. 31, offering guests a vibrant and uplifting escape from the cold.

From the moment visitors stepped into the Orangery within the Display Greenhouse, they were greeted by more than 500 stunning orchids accompanied by air and tropical plants. The experience flowed seamlessly through the Tropical House and concluded with a breathtaking wall display of Phalaenopsis orchids, creating a fully immersive journey filled with color, texture, and fragrance. The bright and colorful orchids proved to be a pleasant pick-me-up during an otherwise gray winter season.

The 2026 Orchid Experience was thoughtfully designed by Kingwood gardener MacKenzie Cole, who led the creative vision for the exhibit. "The design highlights the existing arches and windows with vivid pops of color and unique, fragrant blooms," Cole shared. "In the Tropical House, different genera within the orchid family are featured through multiple educational displays." Her design invites guests not only to admire the beauty of orchids but also to learn about the remarkable diversity within the orchid family.

Open daily from 10 am to 4:30 pm, through March 6, Winter's Interlude showcases both common and exotic orchid species, drawing garden enthusiasts, photographers, and families alike. The exhibit is included with general garden admission, making it an accessible and enriching winter destination for the community.

In addition to the visual display, Kingwood Center Gardens continues to offer orchid-focused educational programs for both children and adults, encouraging curiosity and deeper appreciation for these remarkable plants.

Winter's Interlude – An Orchid Experience is included with regular admission, which is $10 for non-members, $5 for ages 7–18, free for children six and under and free for Kingwood members. For more information visit kingwoodcenter.org or call 419-522-0211.

Galentine's evening planned for Feb. 13

Galentine's Day will be celebrate with a fun night making a beautiful woodland-themed resin pendant under the instruction of Abigail Kent of Emerald Bee Creations and Kingwood Center Gardens on Friday, Feb. 13.

This special Conservation Creation event begins at 5:30 pm at Kingwood Center Gardens. The evening includes learning about woodland stewardship with Katie Gerber, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and North Central Ohio Women Owning Woodlands, while sipping a beverage and enjoying a snack. The cost is $40 per person, and all supplies are provided to create the pendant. Advance registration is required at https://richlandswcd.net/event/galentines-day-conservation-creation-workshop/. This event is presented by Richland Soil and Water Conservation District, Kingwood Center Gardens and North Central Ohio Women Owning Woodlands.

RPS seeking volunteers to meet growing community need

Photos and Article By Traci Little

MANSFIELD — Every week, women, men and families walk through the doors of Richland Pregnancy Services seeking support, guidance, and hope during some of life's most vulnerable moments. While the ministry continues to serve with compassion and care, an increasing demand for services has created an urgent need for additional volunteers.

Currently, Richland Pregnancy Services has 34 weekly volunteers faithfully serving clients. However, to operate at full capacity and meet the growing needs of the community, the center requires 64 total volunteers — leaving 30 open shifts that must be filled.

"We often hear people say they want to make a difference but don't know where to start," shared Executive Director Amy Kahl. "Volunteering with Richland Pregnancy Services is a meaningful way to serve, use your gifts, and be part of something that truly saves and transforms lives."

Volunteer Training Begins in February

Volunteer training will be offered four times throughout 2026, with the first session beginning Friday, February 6. Volunteer opportunities are open to both women and men, and no prior experience is required for many roles — training and support are provided.

Volunteer Opportunities Include:

Client Advocate – Serve as a welcoming presence and meet one-on-one with women during pregnancy test appointments, offering compassionate support, accurate information, and education about available options.

Mentor Mom – Walk alongside pregnant and new mothers from pregnancy until their child turns two, building relationships through guided lessons that encourage confidence, healthy decision-making, and strong parenting skills.

Nurse – Licensed nurses provide pregnancy testing and receive specialized ultrasound training at no cost, using their medical skills in a life-affirming and supportive environment.

Ultrasound Assistant – Assist nurses during ultrasound appointments by supporting client care, room preparation, and comfort during an important and often emotional moment.

Mentor Dad – Encourage and equip fathers by helping them develop healthy parenting and co-parenting skills, often serving men who may not have had strong role models.

Boutique Assistant – Help organize donated baby items and assist families as they select clothing, diapers, and other essentials for their child.

Safety Team – Serve behind the scenes to ensure a safe, peaceful environment by monitoring cameras and observing building activity during two-hour shifts. Team members receive training in de-escalation techniques.

At this time, the ministry's most pressing volunteer needs are Client Advocates, Safety Team members, and Nurses.

A Place for Every Story

Leaders at Richland Pregnancy Services emphasize that volunteers come from all walks of life — and every story matters.

"Often people feel like they cannot be used in a ministry like Richland Pregnancy Services because of choices they may have made in their past," another staff member shared.

"Many of our current staff and volunteers have stories of their own — stories of unplanned pregnancy or choices they may regret. I hope those considering volunteering realize that God will use and redeem those stories. There is a place for you at Richland Pregnancy Services."

For those looking to make a tangible difference in the lives of local families, volunteering offers a powerful opportunity to serve with compassion, dignity, and hope.

Those interested in volunteering or learning more about upcoming training opportunities are encouraged to reach out to Richland Pregnancy Services directly on the website at www.friendsofrichlandpregnancy.com or at 419-522-8862.

Community invited to celebrate the future of Westinghouse site

A landmark in Mansfield's history and landscape is entering a new phase after more than 30 years of quiet. The former Westinghouse site is officially moving forward and the Richland County Land Bank is inviting the community to celebrate the next chapter.

On Saturday, June 13, the Richland County Land Bank, in partnership with the Leadership Unlimited Class of 2026 and local leaders, will host A WestingHOUSE Party, a public event announcing the return of the former Westinghouse campus. Once a key driver of Mansfield's industrial economy, the site is now cleared, prepared, and ready for new development. This milestone is the result of years of coordinated work led by the Richland County Land Bank.

For generations, Westinghouse helped shape Mansfield and Richland County. When operations closed in 1990, the property entered a long pause. That began to change in 2022 when some of the campus's remaining structures came down, creating one of the region's most unique redevelopment opportunities. Today, the site is positioned for its next use — not as a reminder of the past, but as a significant asset for future growth.

A WestingHOUSE Party will include live music from bands like Shucking Bubba, food vendors, activities, a return of the Mansfield Family Festival, sports and fireworks. It reflects a community rapidly moving forward — honoring the people who helped build Mansfield while engaging residents in what comes next. Updates will be shared at facebook.com/brandrichland and sponsorship information is available at http://www.brandrichland.com/a-westinghouse-party.

•Mayoral Vision Panel 2026: Where Big Plans Meet Local Reality

(Continued from Front Page)

quiet, noting a 15-year residential tax abatement passed last year to encourage new home construction.

"If you want nothing, we have a lot of it," he said with a smile.

In Plymouth, Mayor Cassaundra Fryman highlighted collaboration as the key to progress. The village is moving forward with the Plymouth East Road project, widening and repaving the roadway while addressing long-standing drainage issues. The effort is a joint project with New Haven Township, allowing both communities to secure grant funding.

Fryman also said work continues to reopen the Broadway bridge, which has been closed for three years. She is currently working with the Richland County Commissioners to close a funding gap so construction can be bid on this summer.

If funding were unlimited, Fryman said she would invest in a comprehensive downtown restoration, revitalizing historic buildings to attract new businesses.

Regarding property taxes, Fryman acknowledged the uncertainty ahead. "It's above my pay grade," she said. "We'll make it work however best we can."

She also shared positive developments, including delivery of a new ambulance next month that will be housed in Plymouth's new fire station. Fryman encouraged residents to consider volunteering with the fire department or the Plymouth Improvement Committee.

In Lexington, Mayor Bob Jarvis described a dual focus on near-term enhancements and long-term planning. The village received a $425,000 grant from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources toward a nearly $1 million renovation of the Depot Senior Center, which will include expanded outdoor seating, pavers, and an overlook of the Clear Fork River along the bike trail.

Jarvis credited Richland County Parks Director Jordan Tackett and trail supervisor Josh Gyer, with construction expected to begin in early March. If money were no object, Jarvis said he would move forward with a proposed connector road designed to ease Lexington's landlocked constraints and open land for business development. The project is estimated at $18.5 million, with the majority potentially coming from state and federal grants.

While Lexington absorbed only a modest property-tax reduction last year, Jarvis cautioned that full elimination would require alternative revenue sources.

"I don't think everyone realizes how much property taxes fund," he said. "They'd definitely be missed."

Positive updates included a new plow truck, progress on a Safe Routes to School plan, and continued investment in school facilities, including a new elementary school.

Village of Bellville Mayor Teri Brenkus

In Lucas, Mayor Todd Hall said the village is taking steps toward a new water treatment facility to address capacity issues, while pursuing grants and evaluating possible locations.

If funding were unlimited, Hall said he would prioritize downtown revitalization, including murals celebrating Lucas' history, a consistent paving schedule and development near the I-71/State Route 39 interchange.

Hall voiced concerns about eliminating property taxes, particularly the impact on schools and emergency services.

"What happens to Lucas' identity?" he asked. "Who's going to pay for emergency systems?"

Still, Hall shared a positive highlight: the hiring of two new employees who have already made a measurable financial impact, including identifying an accounting error that saved the village $62,000 in a single day.

"As an elected official, when speaking with our constituents, I feel it is extremely important to listen to understand, and not listen to respond. That's something that's really important to me. We won't always agree, but we can listen with the goal to understand."

City leaders: growth, culture and consequences

Among city leaders, Mansfield Mayor Jodie Perry said the city continues to focus on growth, infrastructure and safety with a deeper look at internal culture and leadership development.

Externally, the city is paying closer attention to first impressions.

"We're taking a closer look at what people see as they drive into Mansfield," Perry said.

She pointed to progress at the airport, including a second speculative building site by Adena Development, along with ample water and sewer capacity following upgrades to both treatment plants.

Perry said Mansfield's biggest barrier to growth isn't location or infrastructure — it's attitude.

"We're not on Tinder anymore," she said. "If we want high-level development, we need to believe we're worth it."

Property taxes make up about $3 million of Mansfield's $40 million general fund, Perry said, and while that's a smaller percentage than in many villages, cuts would still be felt. She urged residents to consider the broader consequences of eliminating property taxes, including impacts on schools, libraries and public services.

In Shelby, Mayor Steve Schag said the city's vision centers on healthy business development, strong schools, public safety, parks, and community events — all supported by responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

He said a reduction in property taxes could result in about $400,000 in lost revenue and potentially impact 4-5 city employees.

"That's a huge decision taxpayers will have to make," he said.

In Ontario, newly sworn-in Mayor Josh Bradley emphasized

(Continued on Page 9)

City of Ontario Mayor Josh Bradley

Village of Butler Mayor Wesley Dingus

Village of Lexington Mayor Bob Jarvis

•Mayoral Vision Panel 2026:
Where Big Plans Meet Local Reality

(Continued from Page 8)

transparency and respect, noting that while disagreements are inevitable, residents deserve accessible leadership.

Bradley highlighted Ontario's community-driven comprehensive plan as a guiding document for future growth, shaped by resident input and focused on protecting neighborhoods while supporting local businesses.

He also raised concerns about property-tax elimination, particularly for emergency services, noting that most fire departments in the county rely entirely on property-tax funding.

Momentum — with eyes wide open

The takeaway from the Mayoral Vision Event was clear: momentum is real, but so are the constraints.

Across villages and cities, leaders expressed optimism, collaboration, and pride in their communities — while also acknowledging that infrastructure isn't optional, and neither is funding.

Whether the topic was traffic engineering near a booming interchange, sewer upgrades, bridge replacements, downtown revitalization, or the future of property taxes, the message remained consistent: smart planning now is what keeps growth from becoming a strain later.

Guest Editorial:
Value Found in a Private Education

By Senator Mark Romanchuk

The Founders understood that the path to a thriving republic relies on an educated America.

Without education, this "Republic if you can keep it," would have crumbled in its infancy. This new nation did not initially look to the government to provide education but found it in the churches dotted across the land. From educating children in rural villages to the busy streets of a thriving port city, America's first families found education through the religious institutions around them. The Founders were not against religion in government or in education, they were against a government religion.

Elements of that history continue to this day. Among the most popular options available for parents today are Catholic parochial schools which provide an excellent choice for education across the state. Having a child attend a school that provides both academic excellence as well as moral virtue allows the next generation an opportunity to mature into well-rounded citizens. Receiving an education in a safe, disciplined and welcoming classroom environment matters. In a world that is constantly changing, receiving instruction that includes the bedrock teachings of the Western world gives students a foundation to stand on as they face the issues that will arise in their day and age.

Our state follows our nation's education tradition as well. Ohio made a strong commitment to school choice, so that moms and dads can determine what educational environment best suits their children. This has been a hallmark of the Buckeye State in recent years. I was proud to support the expansion of EdChoice Scholarships for Ohio students in Ohio's previous biennial budget. The Ohio General Assembly's expansion of school choice allowed more than 88,000 students during the 2023–'24 school year to receive a private education that they would have been unable to have otherwise. This school year alone, almost 340,000 students in Ohio are receiving an education at a private school. Make no mistake, the expansion was driven by the distinct demand from parents and families across the state.

Options for a Christian based education are available in almost every community in our state. Even if a parochial school is not nearby, local school districts are required to adopt released time policies so students — with parental approval — can receive religious instruction off school property. I voted in support of this legislation which overwhelmingly passed the General Assembly this past year.

A Christian education can provide instruction that upholds the tenants upon which our nation was founded while instilling in America's students a strong moral compass that will guide them in their adult life. A common sense of virtue is needed for our young people to face life's future challenges. As Pope Leo XIV recently stated, when these schools stay committed to their calling, they "are places of inclusion, integral formation, and human development," and in "combining faith and culture… build a better society."

KCCC's JROTC to host 20th Anniversary Military Ball on Saturday, April 18

Knox County Career Center's (KCCC) JROTC will host its 20th Anniversary Military Ball on Saturday, April 18, at The Gallagher Centre, 1451 Gambier Rd # 6, Mt. Vernon, at 6:30 pm.

The evening will begin with dinner at 6:30 pm, followed by the guest speaker, program and dancing. The featured guest speaker for the evening will be Amber Cox, U.S. Air Force Major and 2012 graduate of KCCC's JROTC.

KCCC's JROTC alumni are welcome to join the event by purchasing a ticket for the evening on a first-come, first-served basis. Tickets are $30 and can be purchased by calling Mrs. Addair at KCCC at 740-397-5820 x2601.

Sold-out "SHREK Jr." brings big Broadway magic to Ashland

By Traci Little

ASHLAND — What happens when Broadway-level talent meets community heart? A sold-out weekend of pure magic.

The Ashland Kroc Center Youth Theater's production of *SHREK Jr.* dazzled audiences at the Ashland Theatre during their recent January performances, transforming the downtown stage into a lively fairytale world filled with music, humor, and unforgettable performances. With every show sold out — in a theater that seats more than 550 — the production proved that world-class theater doesn't have to come from a big city.

With a cast of more than 75 young performers from communities across the region, *SHREK Jr.* showcased the incredible depth of local talent. Ontario was especially well-represented, with standout performances by Payne Schwartz and Emma Henderson, who took on the lead roles and delivered confident, engaging performances that anchored the show.

Ontario was especially well-represented, with standout performances by Payne Schwartz and Emma Henderson, who took on the lead roles and delivered confident, engaging performances that anchored the show.

Breckelle Miller shined as Teen Fiona, earning enthusiastic applause for her powerful solo. Fellow Ontario student Alyssia Pickett, a junior at Ontario/Pioneer Performing Arts, also impressed audiences with her stage presence and vocal talent, alongside her sister Amarria, a 10th grader at Cypress High School. Many audience members commented on the remarkable level of talent coming from Ontario and surrounding communities.

"It felt like watching a Broadway production right here in a small town," one attendee shared — a sentiment echoed throughout the weekend.

The production marked the first time many families experienced a show directed by Majors Billy and Annelise Francis of the Ashland Kroc Center Youth Theater, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Under their leadership, the cast delivered a polished, professional performance while still capturing the heart and joy of youth theater.

The show also featured a fun and meaningful cameo by local leaders, who returned to the stage after last year's production of The Music Man. Participating as "salesmen" were Steve Paramore, Ben Spieldenner, Mike Cook, Tony Shambaugh, Dennis Miller, Dan Lawson, Cristian Perrin, and "Papa Ogre" Billy Francis — adding a special community touch to the production.

Behind the scenes, countless volunteers and parents worked tirelessly to bring the whimsical world of SHREK to life. Several theater parents even dedicated their New Year's Day to building set pieces,

(Continued on Page 11)

PLAYING FIONA in the production of *SHREK Jr.* are Ellyana Finlay as young Fiona, Emma Henderson as adult Fiona and Breckelle Miller as teen Fiona

•Sold-out "SHREK Jr." brings big Broadway magic to Ashland

(Continued from Page 10)

including the iconic swamp tunnel and Fiona's tower — a reminder that community theater is truly a team effort.

The production was made possible through generous sponsorships, including Premier Sponsors Bohland Jewelers and Trinity Lutheran Church; Shrek's Swamp Sponsors Bob and Jan Archer and Vinyl Marketing; and Fiona's Tower Sponsors Ryan and Kaitin Chandler and an anonymous donor.

Beyond the stage, the Ashland Kroc Center Youth Theater continues to open doors for young performers through Star Search, a Salvation Army national music and arts competition focused on talent development and creative expression.

Majors Billy and Annelise Francis mentor students who compete at the state and national levels, with the Ohio State competition set for April 25 in Cleveland and national finals scheduled for June 13 in Hershey, Pennsylvania.

The program has already seen remarkable success. At the 2024 Territorial Finals in Hershey, the Singing Company earned second place, Drama Troupe Level A placed first, and Drama Troupe Level B earned second. Individual students also brought home top honors across vocal, piano, dance, guitar and drama categories.

All of these groups and individuals earned first-place finish at the state level, showcasing the depth of talent being cultivated locally.

Among those continuing their journey, Breckelle Miller is currently auditioning for Singing Company, Vocal Solo, Drama Troupe, and monologue competitions.

As the curtain closed on *SHREK Jr.*, one thing was clear: this was a celebration of creativity, collaboration, and the extraordinary talent growing right here in north-central Ohio.

KNOX COUNTY CAREER CENTER (KCCC) student Mason Berry scored in the Top 10 in the state of Ohio on the Microsoft Office Specialist Certification Exam. Berry, a junior in CollegeU-Business, scored in 9th place on the Microsoft Office (Microsoft 365 Apps) Exam. He is the first student at KCCC to score in the Top 10. Mrs. Murphy, Berry's CollegeU-Business instructor, said, "Congratulations to Mason! He is an outstanding student who works really hard at his craft. This is quite an accomplishment."

News Briefs in Education

Heidelberg University has announced the names of students who have earned academic recognition on the fall semester dean's list.

According to Provost Dr. Courtney DeMayo Pugno, students must be enrolled full time and meet academic criteria set forth by the university to be named to the dean's list.

Local students on the list are Ryleigh Gorman, senior, Lexington; and Anzaya Estep, sophomore, Mansfield.

★

Will Bolin, a graduate of Ontario High School, has graduated from Baldwin Wallace University in Berea, OH, with a Master of Business Administration: Business Analytics.

★

Local students have been named to the 2025 Autumn Semester Dean's List at Columbus State Community College. To be named to the list, a student must achieve a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or higher and be enrolled for six or more credit hours. On the list from Mansfield are Payton Hoyt-Barwick, Kristi Nutter and Chance Stoney.

★

Noah Burton of Mansfield graduated from Columbus State Community College during Autumn Semester commencement held on Dec. 19, 2025.

★

The Richland County Foundation awarded over $1M in college and career technical education scholarships last year.

The college scholarship application for this year is now open for Richland County high school seniors and current college students. The deadline is April 1.

Career technical education scholarships are awarded to students who want to obtain certifications and credentials at accredited technical institutions. The Foundation has a rolling application to accommodate various deadlines.

For more information visit the website at richlandcountyfoundation.org or contact Community Investment Officer Bobby Rhea at 419- 525-3020 or brhea@rcfoundation.org.

View & Print Past Issues at www.tribune-courier.com

Black History Celebration returns to main library branch February 7

The Mansfield/Richland County Public Library (MRCPL) invites the community to its annual Black History Celebration, a free, family-friendly event honoring Black history, culture, and achievement. The celebration will take place at the Main Library, 43 W. Third St., Mansfield, on Saturday, Feb. 7, from 11 am to 3 pm.

This year's celebration carries special significance as February 2026 marks the 100th anniversary of Black History celebrations in the United States. The observance began in 1926 as Negro History Week, founded by historian Carter G. Woodson, and later expanded into Black History Month in 1976 when it was formally recognized under President Gerald Ford.

The day's festivities will include live entertainment, trivia, face painting, giveaways, interactive activities, and a free meal. Programming begins at 11 am in the second-floor lobby, featuring a performance by the Mansfield Senior Choir students, who will open with "Lift Every Voice and Sing," followed by additional selections.

A free meal prepared by local caterer Glynis Haney will be served from 11:30–12:30 pm, while supplies last. Attendees will also have the opportunity to connect with several local organizations offering activities and resources, including the Alzheimer's Association, NAACP Mansfield, North End Community Improvement Collaborative (NECIC), Richland County Children's Services, First Call 211, Ohio State University–Mansfield Black Student Association, and Third Street Family Health Services.

At 2:30 pm, the library's Sherman Room will host "Roots at 50: Reimagining the Legacies of Lineage." Fifty years after its publication, this engaging program explores how Alex Haley's groundbreaking semi-autobiographical novel reshaped genealogy, history, and literature. A panel of experts from Ohio State University will lead a thought-provoking discussion on Haley's lasting impact.

Guests of all ages are encouraged to participate in curated activities throughout the library. Upon arrival, attendees will receive an Activity Pass; completed passes can be entered for a chance to win one of two $50 Walmart gift cards.

In addition to the Feb. 1 celebration, MRCPL will continue honoring Black History Month with special programming.

On Feb. 14, at 1:30 pm in the Main Library Community Room, the Children's Theatre of Cincinnati will present "Harriet Tubman: Straight Up Outta' the Underground." This live, one-woman, interactive storytelling performance brings history to life as audiences follow Harriet Tubman on her courageous journey to freedom and her repeated missions to guide others along the Underground Railroad. This 45-minute, family-friendly performance is ideal for students in grades 3–8.

For more information and a complete list of Black History Celebration activities and programs, visit mrcpl.org.

Area Agency on Aging scholarship applications now being accepted

The Area Agency on Aging has announced its 2026 scholarship program, aimed at supporting individuals pursuing higher education or certification in the field of aging or disability services.

The board will award scholarships to deserving individuals who demonstrate a commitment to making a positive impact on the lives of older adults and those with disabilities through their educational pursuits. Scholarship award amounts are determined by the agency's on Aging Corporate Board of Trustees for Academic Year 2026–'27:

Two $1,000 scholarships will be provided for any student attending a 4-year university. One $500 scholarship is available for any student attending a 2-year college, technical school, center of education or is pursuing a certification One $500 scholarship is available for a student attending any type of higher institute of learning or certification and a retiree or staff member of the Area Agency on Aging or is a child, grandchild or stepchild of an actively employed (full time or part time) Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. staff member.

The deadline for application is March 15, 2026. Applicants are encouraged to visit aaa5ohio.org for detailed eligibility criteria and application instructions.

Honor and Merit Rolls

Ontario Middle School

Second Grading Period

ALL A

Sixth Grade — Holden Allen, Mason Barley, Ellie Bayer, Lincoln Bell, Six Blancett, Greyson Born, Breah Boyd, Quinten Breedlove, Reagan Buckner, Addie Buttil, Canaan Cash, Adriana Cervantes, Kooper Daugherty, Mason Dawson, Aubree Draper, Marley Dudleson, Zayne Dzugan-Besenti Dzugan, Marcus Eberst, Ary Estrada, Gwenn Exten-Skarie, Brooklynn First, Zef Franco, Zoey Franco, Parker Friend, Maddy Gray, Zoey Grayson, Ellie Groscost, Abbi Guth, George Horning, Ava Hristovski, Abby Jenkins, Levi King, Tyrin Kirst, Quinn Kline, Gia Knipp, Cooper Krebs, Baylee Kuhlman, Ellie Lawhorn, Rosie Lawhorn, Camden Linger, Lucy Linger, Adam Mackey, Kendall Mcferren, Madelyn Moots, Harper Mottayaw, Bradley Munoz, Mariah Oden, Payton Orren, Kaydence Orsini, Vaidehi Patel, Brynn Potter, Stefan Prykhodko, Hadley Risner, Hardtly Roig, Max Ruhe, Abigail Sandwall, Amelia Sandwall, Cambri Schneider, Kennadi Schneider, Rylee Schoonover, Niko Sersen, Avery Smith, Hudson Sowards, Carson Speck, Naomi Sutter, Braeden Swiatek, Lillian Thomas, Harley Ulery, Sloane Walter, Evie Walton, Leelah Weaver, Saniyah Webb, Maleah Wells, Cooper Welty, Kinley Whisler, Siannah Witherspoon, Bray Wyrick, Charlie Yoakam and Lock Zeigler

Seventh Grade — Kale Ames, Crew Arter, Preston Baumgard, Garrett Bender, Oliver Biddle, Juliana Blunk, Jacob Bonte, Sophi Breitinger, Kaylee Cochran, Andrew Coley, Meghan Dille, Wailynn Dzugan, Kacey Finley, Albany Hacker, Jett Hale, Adam Hamilton, Sammie Hamilton, Aubrey Hawkins, Elliana Heydinger, Maeley Hiner, Pippa Hines, Kavian Hively, Blake Jourden, Cameron Cam Kreinbrink, James Lee, Marley Mullins, Briggs Musick, Isaac Simpers, Eli Sterner, Hannah Them, Hiep Tran, Emelyn Truax, Briella Van Harlingen, Trace Wetzel and Benton Willis

Eighth Grade — Grayson Bradley, Charlie Cotter, Jeffrey Davis, Zoe Decimus, Nolan Dials, Tyler Domyan, Sam Dumas, Ava Estep, Nico Fox, Connor Goodlin, Zoey Jones, Gage Kososky, Ian Linger, Emery Miller, Dylan Milligan, Naomi Mullins, Hudsyn Pelphrey, Julia Pohlabel, Alyssa Racer, Ahyaan Saif, Blake Schwartz, Callie Scott, Chloe Siburt, Aileen Steiding Mora, Walter Tickhill, Carter Tomlinson, Cole Walter, Braden Ward, Saniyah Witherspoon and Logan Zeigler

HONOR ROLL

Sixth Grade — Brax Chandler, Cali Dalton, Reeve Fanello, Emmett Fitch, Kendall Friley, Kindsey Gregory, Lexi Headley, Quinn Horsley, Zoey Howard, Emma Lawhorn, Greyson Loper, Kali Lovejoy, Macy McClellan, Gideon OBrian, Lydia Ratushinskaya-Saltz, Aria Schwartfigure, Kaden Smith, Landon Spellman, Tegan Teggart, Arianna Tipton, Lily Tomlinson, Harry Yugovich and Darren Zudell

Seventh Grade — Harper Armstrong, Holly Barker, Will Bishop, Grady Boyd, Owen Brinker, Khloe Browning, Wyatt Click, Liam Conn, Amaya Dean, Nico DiOrio, Becca Dunkle, Jordyn Featheringill, Evan Fleming, Freh Gushard, Addy Harvey, Ryland Hensel, Isaac Hohman, Jaevin Howard, Brody Kuhlman, Lexi McCracken, Cali Miller, Chloe Nemeth, Chloe Perry, Everly Roig, Miles Ruhe, Aaliyah Schaade, Bella Shafer, Carringten Smith, Jonah Smith, Jillian Soliday, Lucy Spellman, Eva Uhde and Hadley Vavra

Eighth Grade — Leyton Bender, Breahna Blackstone, Emma Boor, Hudson Born, Sylvi Burns, Brody Carpenter, Emilee Eberhardt, Reed Eberst, Tim Elias, Cheyenne Elliott, Brooklyn Gobble, Hayden Grisham, Keatyn Kilgore, Aiden Kirst, Ava Lamb, Ronnie Maddox, Zander Monroy, Rinka Mori, Carson Mosier, Jarrett Peachee, Carter Robinson, Molly Sapp, Cruz Schroeder, Jett Soliday, Trevor Stacy, Clay Stevens, Char Wagoner and Makayla Wells

MERIT ROLL

Sixth Grade — Isabella Al-Farsi, Kayleb Barnhart, Ady Copley, Hunter Danals, Braelynn Fultz, Colt Hall, CJ Johnson, Kennedi Johnson, Dylan Kissel, Harper Marvin, Carter Meyer, Bronson Miller, Kai Muir, Yug Patel, Drey Patterson, Morgan Pocock, Jaliyah Preston, Conner Robbins, Olivea Scott, Gregory Secrist, Zoey Seidel, Karter Stephens, Karsen Streich, Logan Tucker, Phyllip Walter, Tyler Weisman, Ayvree Wilson, Lila Winans and Blake Zeigler,

Seventh Grade — Wyatt Bechstein, Hazel Bessette, Avery Caldwell, Asher Clark, Jarren Crace, Kale DeHart, Matthew Dickson, Wyatt Eddleblute, Will Fenner, Gavin Fitzpatrick, Danielle Frasz, Ava Herold, Flynn Jovani, Micah Klopfenstein, Lexie McClain, Macie McClain, Gavin Meligan, Claire Moritz, Hudson Morrison, CJ Moyer, Philip Pickens, Gavin Polotto, Larkin Rietschlin, Rowyn Santry, Bryson Smith, Grace Vermillion and Liam Wilson-Golden

Eighth Grade — Bella Calise, Liam Chitwood, Fenton Cobb, Braxton Collins, Airiona Courtney, Andrew Crouch, Whitley Hall, Renelle Harris, Jason Harwood, Hayden Headley, Jordan Heckard, Isabella Hobson, Serenity Ivy, Lavary Jackson, Deklan Jovani, Karsynn Lawhorn, Dereiah Lawrence, AidenMattoni, Aubrey McAleer, Kellan McManes, Gage Miller, Braylen Moore, Le Phan, Thao Gutierrez, Ramirez Kiran Jayson Reedy, Rychel Rehberg, Jocelyn Risner, Braxton Schneider, Zoey Schwartfigure, Loewen Shaw, Abby Shira, Mackenzie Shupp (Kenzie Keller), Jaiden Sines, Brooks Smith, Camron Smithberger, Luke Spellman and Olivia Whisler

Latrell Hughes signs with Oregon

By Kris Leiter

Latrell Hughes signed his Letter of Intent to pursue track and field at the University of Oregon on Jan. 29. He will attend the university to major in computer science.

Latrell is the son of Jermaine and Susan Hughes and is is a three-sport athlete.

His accolades in cross country include being a 4-Year Varsity Letter Winner, 2-time Male OCC Runner of the Year, 2024 Division II Individual State Runner Up and 2025 Division II Team State Champion.

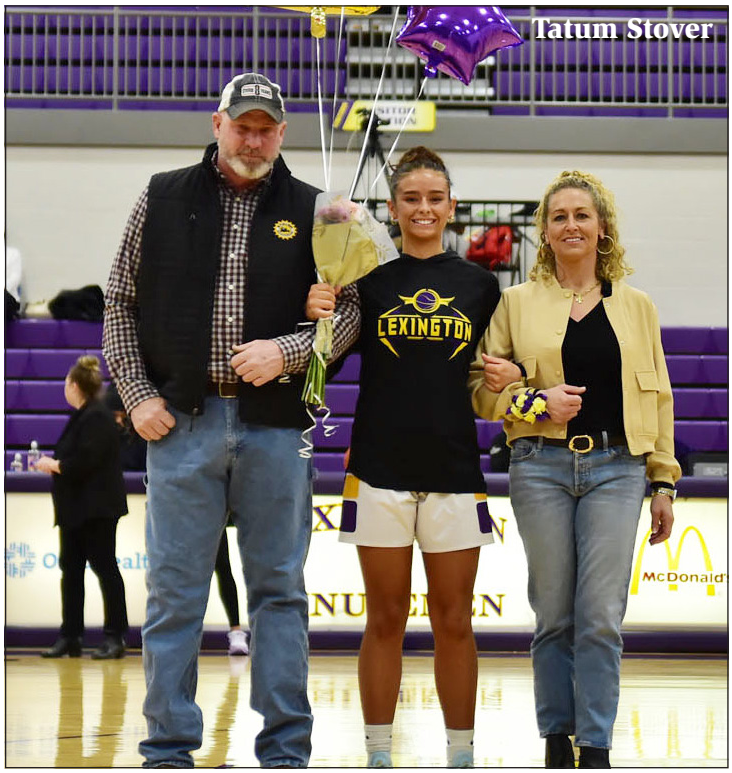
In basketball he is a 2-Year Varsity Letter Winner, 2-time Team OCC Champs and Division III District Runner Up.

For indoor track, he was a state qualifier in 400m and 800m run with top times recorded in the state of Ohio in four divisions. This past weekend he broke a school record with 48.84 in the 400M dash.

He is a 4-Year Varsity Letter Winner for track and field and was a 2025 Division I 800m State Champion, 2025 Division I 4x800m Relay State Champion, 2025 Division I 4x400m Relay State Runner Up, six-time All Ohioan, 2-time All American and eight-time National High School Coaches Association All-American. He had a state championship performance in the 800 meter run with a school record performance of 1:51.00 and ran his way to his second state title of the weekend.

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS MANSFIELD SENIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · JAN. 28
SENIOR NIGHT · LEXINGTON WINS 65–22 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



Tatum Stover

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS MANSFIELD SENIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · JAN. 28 SENIOR NIGHT · LEXINGTON WINS 65–22 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER

Lady Lex topples Mansfield Senior 65–22

By Kris Leiter

The Ohio Cardinal Conference had two friendly foes going nose-to-nose on Jan. 28 in the Lexington Minutemen gymnasium.

Lady Lex (2–18, 2–11, seventh OCC) took advantage of the home court and put some hot numbers on the scoreboard against the Mansfield Lady Tygers (0–18, 0–13, eighth OCC).

The weather may have been chilly, but Lady Lex didn't waste any time warming-up the first quarter as they would sizzle the scoreboard with 21 points compared to Mansfield's 4.

In the second quarter, Lexington was relentless and added 25 points as the Lady Tygers scored just 13.

At the halftime horn, Lady Lex was holding a comfortable lead 45–17.

In the third, neither team would score in double-figure totals as Lex would drum up 6 points and Mansfield would come up empty with none.

Lex was now leading 52–17 by the end of three quarters.

During the final quarter, Lexington brought lucky number 13 to their score to come to the total of 65, as Mansfield would drum up only 5.

Leading the pack in the stats column this year so far for Lexington is freshman Sophia Brown averaging 13 points per game, an incredible 58 rebounds and eight blocks. Teammate senior Tatum Stover is averaging 24-points per game, 28 rebounds and an amazing 16 assists thus far.

The Lexington seniors, Lauren Risser and Tatum Stover, were recognized at the game during senior night festivities.

Lauren Risser

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

Ashland Arrows celebrate seniors

Photos and Article By Traci Little

The Ashland Arrows girls' basketball team honored one of the winningest senior classes in program history on Senior Night with a 63–55 victory over West Holmes.

The four seniors — Madison Hoffman, Kaya Hendershott, Grace Tobias and Camryn Cox — were recognized prior to the 1:30 pm game on Jan. 31.

The win kept the Arrows undefeated in Ohio Cardinal Conference play at 13–0 and improved their overall record to 17–1. The seniors were celebrated for their leadership and lasting impact on the program, cementing their place in Ashland history as just the third senior class to achieve back-to-back conference championships and for setting the standard for Arrow basketball.

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

ASHLAND VS WEST HOLMES GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL · JAN. 31
SENIOR NIGHT · ARROWS WIN 63–55 · PHOTOS TRACI LITTLE

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

ASHLAND VS MADISON VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL · JAN. 20
ARROWS WIN 65–44 · PHOTOS LILLIANA ALLEN

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

ASHLAND VS MADISON JUNIOR VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL · JAN. 20
RAMS WIN 70–62 · PHOTOS LILLIANA ALLEN

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS SHELBY VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · FEB. 2
SHELBY WINS 37–32 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

ONTARIO AT THE SALLY GEORGE WRESTLING INVITATIONAL AT PLEASANT JAN. 31 · JULIAN MCGINTY AND TYLER TURNBAUGH NAMED CHAMPIONS

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

MANSFIELD SENIOR VS MADISON VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · JAN. 21
RAMS WIN 59–24 · PHOTOS LILLIANA ALLEN

CLASSIFIEDS

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 January 21, 2026.

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. 26-05 – AN ORDINANCE AWARDING A CONTRACT TO HENDERSON FOR THE PURCHASE OF A SNOW AND ICE PACKAGE FOR NEW TRUCK THROUGH NATIONAL PURCHASING PARTNERS GOVERNMENT, REPEALING ORDINANCE 26-04, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Abbey Beaver
Asst. Clerk of Council
City of Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 1-29, 2-5, 2026) 23L

Mom of three missing from Miami County

The family and friends of Ashley Perkins, 39, is reaching out to the public in hopes of locating the mother of three missing from Miami County, OH.

Ashley Perkins was last seen on Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2026, during the afternoon hours in West Milton, OH. She was officially reported missing to the Miami County Sheriff's Office on Friday, Jan. 23.

Currently, her family and friends are extremely concerned for her safety and are seeking broader public awareness. It is believed that her license plate was pinged in Cincinnati, on Thursday, Jan. 22, and then was possibly seen in Dayton, off Stanley Avenue around 3 am on Friday, Jan. 23.

Ashley Perkins is a white female, with shorter hair dyed blonde. Her car is a gold Saturn Sedan, license plate is KUN5041, with a front plate that may have hearts on it.

Although adults are not always immediately issued official alerts, her family and community believe that time is critical, and that increased visibility could help generate leads or confirm her safety.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Miami County Sheriff's Office (Troy, Ohio) or Ashley's family directly Lisa Perkins (mother) at 937-609-4285

There was a message received by her mother from an unknown individual that indicated that there were two potential individuals that could have been involved in causing harm to Ashley. It has not been determined if this is credible information, but the names of those individuals are Blake Wiekert and Dave or David Werst.

Red Cross urging donors to give

The American Red Cross urges people to take action now to help offset the impact of recent winter storms on efforts to rebuild the blood supply. Donors of all blood types are asked to make a blood or platelet donation appointment as soon as possible.

Appointments can be booked to give blood or platelets by using the Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767). All who come to give through Feb. 28, will receive a $20 e-gift card to a merchant of choice.

Upcoming blood donation opportunities:

Friday, Feb. 6, 11 am to 4 pm, The Ontario Center, Ontario

Monday, Feb. 9, noon to 5 pm, The Ontario Center

Tuesday, Feb. 10, noon to 6 pm, Saint Paul Lutheran Church, 48 Church St., Bellville

Wednesday, Feb. 11, noon to 6 pm, The Ontario Center; and 1–6 pm, Planktown Country Market, 1921 Free Rd., Shiloh

Thursday, Feb. 12, 8:30 am to 1:30 pm, St. Peter's High School, 111 W. First St., Mansfield

Friday, Feb. 13, noon to 5 pm, The Ontario Center

Monday, Feb. 16, noon to 5 pm, The Ontario Center

Wednesday, Feb. 18, noon to 6 pm, The Ontario Center; and 1–6 pm, Lucas Community Center, 252 W. Main St., Lucas; and 7 am to 1 pm, K of C Hall, 208 Vernon Rd., Shelby

Friday, Feb. 20, 8 am to 1 pm, Medical Office Building, 4th Floor, 335 Glessner Ave., Mansfield; 10 am to 3 pm, YMCA, 750 Scholl Rd., Mansfield; and noon to 5 pm, The Ontario Center

Monday, Feb. 23, noon to 5 pm, The Ontario Center

Wednesday, Feb. 25, noon to 6 pm, The Ontario Center

Saturday, Feb. 28, 9 am to 2 pm, The Ontario Center