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news@tribune-courier.com 04.09.26

OHIO STATE REPRESENTATIVE Marilyn John presents a Proclamation in recognition of Child Abuse Prevention Month during a kick-off on Wednesday, April 1.

Richland County unites to launch Child Abuse Prevention Month

Photos and Article By Traci Little

MANSFIELD — A powerful message of unity, awareness and shared responsibility filled the air Wednesday, April 1, as Richland County officially kicked off Child Abuse Prevention Month with a community-wide rally at the Mansfield Branch of the YMCA of North Central Ohio.

A sea of blue pinwheels — the national symbol of child abuse prevention, now lines both the YMCA grounds and the Richland County Courthouse. It serves as a visible reminder throughout April of the importance of advocacy and prevention. Paired with "Stand Up for Children" signage, the display encourages ongoing community awareness.

Hosted by Richland County Children Services (RCCS), the annual event brought together families, community leaders, students, local organizations, and law enforcement under this year's theme: "Together We Protect Their Tomorrows." The message was clear—protecting children is a responsibility shared by the entire community.

The morning began with a warm welcome from YMCA Executive Director James Twedt, who highlighted the organization's role as a safe and supportive space for local youth.

"The YMCA has great partnerships with other organizations, but especially with Richland County Children's Services," Twedt said, "We serve over 1,000 children every single year. From childcare to swimming lessons to basketball and dance, we support children each and every day. The YMCA currently serves ages ranging from 6 weeks old to an active member at age 96."

Proclamations recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month were presented by representatives from state and local offices, including Mike DeWine's office, Ohio State Representative Marilyn John, and Mansfield Mayor, Jodie Perry.

Speaking on behalf of families impacted by fostering, John reflected on the lasting relationships formed through care and compassion. She reflected tenderly about her sister fostering for about twenty years.

"We took that opportunity to love those kids to the best of our ability. There are some individuals we are still in contact with and we consider them to be part of our family. They are adults now with children of their own," John said. "I saw firsthand what you all do on a day-to-day basis with protecting children. So the work that you all do is critical to protecting children. It's time for us all to pledge and commit to do the same. What else should we be doing? Let's help these little ones become all that God intended them to be!"

Perry emphasized the role of the entire community in safeguarding children's futures. She emphasized that one of the things that sets Richland County apart is the way it collaborates with causes such as Child Abuse Prevention. "We allow ourselves to put down our different turfs and come together for great causes like this," she noted.

"Every child deserves to grow up in a safe, stable and nurturing environment," Perry said. "Preventing abuse is a shared responsibility and every action taken today helps safeguard the future of the children in our care."

(Continued on Page 11)

Richland County locations open for Prescription Take Back Day

The METRICH Enforcement Unit will be partnering with the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and local law enforcement to present another Prescription Take Back event for the community on Saturday, April 25.

This event is sponsored by the Mansfield Division of Police, Richland County Sheriff's Office, Shelby Police Department, Lexington Police Department, Plymouth Police Department, Richland County Solid Waste Authority, Richland Public Health, Community Action for Capable Youth (CACY) and the Richland County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board.

Pills and liquids in sealed containers or bags only, will be accepted (no sharps, batteries, vape pens or inhalers). This is only for household unused or expired medications — no pharmacies, businesses or pharmaceutical sales reps.

Richland County will have five locations open from 10 am to 2 pm. These include the Richland County Solid Waste Authority facility, 1125 National Pkwy., Mansfield; Richland County Sheriff's Office, 597 Park Avenue East, Mansfield; Shelby Police Department, 31 Mack Ave., Shelby; Plymouth Police Department, 48 W. Broadway St., Plymouth; and the Lexington Police Department, 44 W. Main St., Lexington.

For more information related to the takeback event call Lt. Steve Blust at 419-755-9677.

The Entertainment Examiner

— By Ian Stumbo —

28 Years Later: The Bone Temple was released in theaters in early 2026 and is now streaming on Netflix. This is the sequel to last years *28 Years Later* (a film I was very mixed on).

These two films are a follow-up to Danny Boyle's excellent *28 Days Later* from 2002 and its sequel *28 Weeks Later* in 2007.

This sequel picks up where the previous film left off with the cult known as the Fingers trying to establish themselves in this post-apocalyptic setting with their beliefs and violent ways while Dr. Ian Kelson (Ralph Fiennes) is trying to find a breakthrough in the illness of an infected person. The doctor and the Fingers lives intersect in many interesting ways leading to a conclusion featuring a surprise cameo.

As mixed as I was with the previous entry, *The Bone Temple* was a better film because it had more established characters and a better through line with the plot. Director Nia DaCosta incorporates the trademark gore but its kept to a minimum in service of the story. Fiennes is great as always as the doctor.

It will be interesting to see if they will make another entry but I personally was pleasantly surprised with this movie as now this world is established and it was good to see what writer Alex Garland did with it.

28 Years Later: The Bone Temple comes out after a very uneven previous film. It has more character development, better plot lines and keeps your interest. For a fan of this series, this is a solid entry.

Letter to the Editor

I am writing this letter to express my strong support for upholding private property rights, specifically the right of landowners to enter into voluntary agreements for solar, wind, or battery storage projects on their land.

As a resident and property owner of this county, I believe that farmers and landowners deserve the freedom to make economic decisions about their own property. Leasing land for energy projects provides a reliable income that sustains farms and properties, keeps land in the family for future generations, and strengthens our local economy.

I encourage the board to avoid restrictive zoning ordinances or blanket bans that create a "one-size-fits-all" approach to . Instead, I ask that you support policies that treat energy development as a permitted land use, provided projects meet standard health and safety requirements.

Please trust in your neighbors and farmers to make thoughtful decisions about their property.

Dianne Parker

Senior Spring Extravaganza to be held for Older Americans Month

The Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. will host a free Senior Spring Extravaganza on Friday, May 29, from 10 am to 2 pm, at the Mid-Ohio Education Center, 890 W. 4th St., Mansfield.

In partnership with the Administration for Community Living, this year's Older Americans Month theme is Champion Your Health!

The festive Mardi Gras-style event will be focused on healthy and positive aging. Guests will enjoy resources and information on aging-related topics, along with a free lunch, BINGO, an on-site classic car show, music by Randy Velez and a variety of community vendors.

Register for a car show slot by calling 567-247-6458. Registration is not required to attend this event. No early birds, please. For more information call 419-524-4144 or follow www.facebook.com/aaa5ohio. Sponsorships are available by visiting www.aaa5ohio.org

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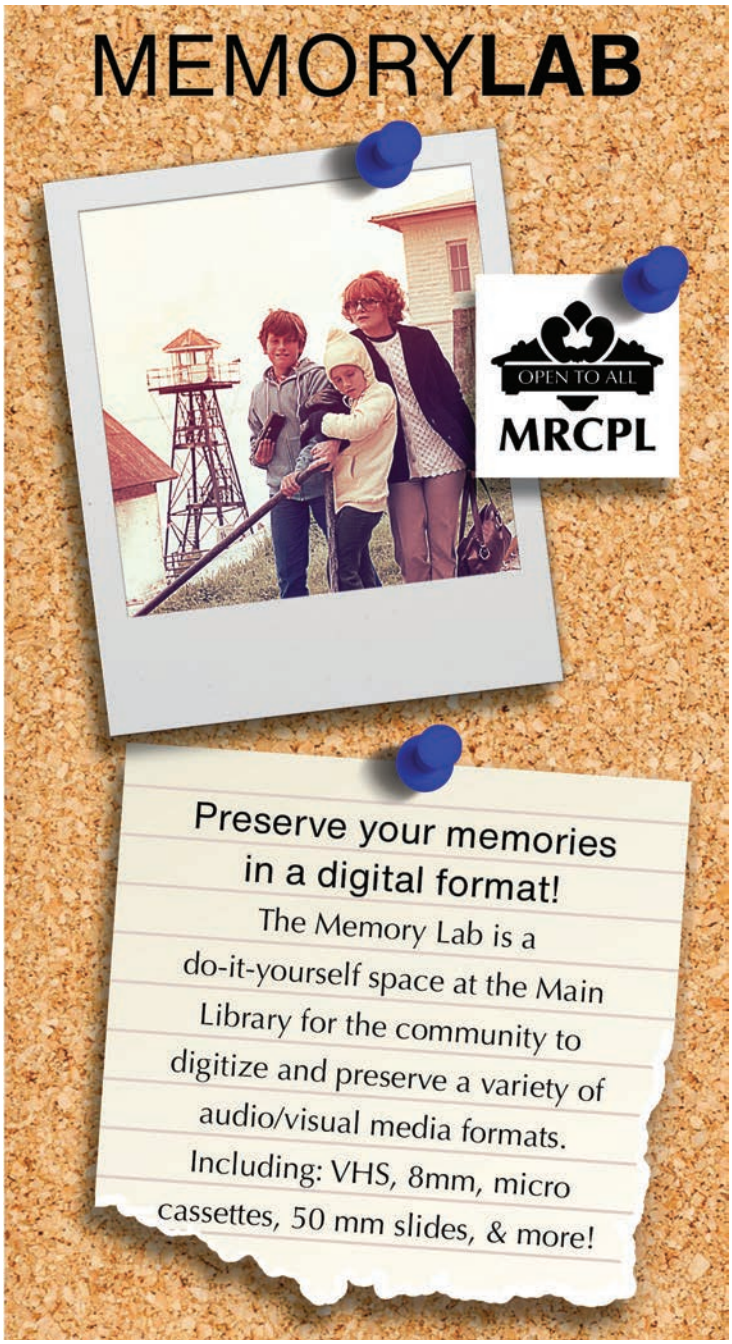

News Briefs

The Ontario Lions Pancake Breakfast will be held Saturday, April 18, from 6:30 am to noon at the Ontario High School.

The cost is $7 with kids six and under eating free.

The menu will include all-you-can-eat pancakes with sausage, coffee, milk and juice. Door prizes will be donated by local businesses and winners need not to be present to win.

★

Ontario UMC, 3540 Park Ave West, Ontario, will host exercise/walking led by an instructor for various age groups every Thursday at 10 am. This is open to the community at no charge. This will include chair yoga, dance exercise, resistance bands and walking.

★

U.S. 42 (East Main Street) northbound and southbound in the Village of Lexington, from SR 546 (Frederick Street) to Castor Road, will have daily lane closures for a roadway and intersection improvement project. The northbound and southbound driving lanes will be closed for sidewalk, signal, and roadway work.

Traffic will be maintained with 12' lanes in each direction with barrels. Project work includes adding bike lanes, reconfiguring intersection access, and various pedestrian improvements. Estimated completion is May 2026.

★

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 April 15, and will include ham. Those attending are encouraged to wear Easter bonnets.

Dale Powers will sing and a collection of non-perishable food will be taken for the Salvation Army. Can openers, food, hygiene items, paper products and monetary donations will be accepted.

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

★

The City of Ontario will hold meetings at the city building, 555 Stumbo Rd., Ontario. April meetings will include April 15, 6:15 pm, caucus; and 7 pm, council.

★

Mansfield 1st Presbyterian Church, 399 S. Trimble Rd., will host a spring rummage sale Friday, April 17, from 9 am to 4 pm; and Saturday, April 18, from 9 am to noon.

Items will include clothing for children and adults, shoes, books, toys, housewares, furniture and more. Proceeds are used for local missions. For information call 419-756-7066.

★

State Route 13 between Ross Road and Honey Creek Road closed Monday, April 6 for a culvert replacement. The detour route is SR 13 south to SR 97 west to Lexington to U.S. 42 south to SR 546 south to SR 13 and reverse. Estimated completion is Friday, April 10.

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Ave. West, Mansfield, offers a free produce distribution the second Tuesday of each month, April through November in the west parking lot.

The next free produce distribution will be Tuesday, April 14, from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm. The church receives over 6,000 lbs. of fresh produce. This is open to lower income households, please bring a state ID, driver's license or proof of residence.

This is a drive-through distribution in the west parking lot. Volunteers will load the produce into trunks or the back of vehicles. Please have vehicle empty and ready for loading. For information call the church at 419-522-0662.

★

I-71 from the Ashland County line to SR 13 will have single lane closures when necessary for a resurfacing project. Crews will begin work in the median to remove and repair cable wire in the median. Estimated completion is October 2026.

★

Mechanics Bank will host the OhioHealth mobile mammography unit on Thursday, April 23, from 9 am to 2 pm at its location at 490 N. Trimble Rd., Mansfield.

Those receiving service should bring an insurance card and photo ID. The location should be mentioned when scheduling at 614-566-1111 or 1-877-566-1112. A prescription from a physician is required for mammograms for women under 40. Women 40 and older do not require a doctor's order.

★

State Route 13 from the Knox County line through the village of Bellville to Andrews Road will have single lane closures for a resurfacing project. Traffic will be maintained by flaggers. Estimated completion is October 2026.

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, April 25 and 26. 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.

ACCA accepting sale donations

The Ashland County Cancer Association is accepting gently used donations for its annual rummage sale.

Donations will be accepted at the ACCA office, 1011 E. Main St., Ashland, Monday through Thursday, 9 am to 4 pm until May 7; and at the Ashland County Fairgrounds, 2042 Claremont Ave., Ashland, May 11–22 and May 26–29, from 10 am to 5 pm,

Acceptable donations include clothing and shoes (infant–adult), furniture and home décor, household, kitchen, bed and bath, electronics and appliances, books, games and toys, jewelry and purses, kids and baby items, tools, sports and outdoor, pet supplies, seasonal items and antiques.

The sale is scheduled for Wednesday, June 3, from 2–8 pm; Thursday, June 4, from 9 am to 7 pm; and Friday, June 5, from 9 am to 3 pm, at the fairgrounds.

The sale is held indoors and will continue rain or shine with cash and debit payments accepted. There will also be food available.

For more information call 419-281-1863 or text 419-606-0549.

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Richland County poll workers needed for primary on May 5

The Richland County Board of Elections is seeking dedicated community members to serve as poll workers for the upcoming May 5, 2026, Primary Election.

Poll workers are essential to ensuring that all registered voters have a smooth, secure and accessible Election Day experience.

"Poll workers are the backbone of democracy," said Matt Finfgeld, director. "Their service helps make sure every voter can cast a ballot with confidence. We welcome individuals of all backgrounds to sign-up and support their neighbors on Election Day."

Poll workers are compensated for their training and service, with pay ranging from $170 to $215. Responsibilities will include assisting voters, operating voting equipment, and closing the polls at the end of the day. Training will be provided prior to the election.

To be eligible, poll workers must be at least 17 years old, be a registered voter in Richland County and be able to attend mandatory training prior to Election Day.

Interested individuals should visit vote.richlandcountyoh.gov, call 419-774-5530 or email boardofelections@richlandcountyoh.gov to learn more and complete an application.

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

Camp welcoming volunteers

Flying Horse Farms (FHF), Ohio's Medical Specialty Camp that serves kids with serious illnesses and their families at no cost, is seeking volunteers for family weekends and camp sessions.

FHF offers a variety of volunteer roles for all skill levels, including arrival day volunteer, day camp volunteer, family sidekick, activity counselor, kitchen crew, entertainment team, lifeguard, photographer, physicians, registered nurses and psychosocial team.

Sessions in greatest need include The MAGIC Foundation Family Camp, May 1–3; Sibs Camp, June 1–6; and Gastrointestinal & Mental Health Camp, June 17–22.

Family weekends start in April and continue in October and November. Summer sessions are ongoing June–August.

More information and applications are available at https://flyinghorsefarms.org/volunteer/volunteer-opportunities/

Volunteers receive benefits including verified service hours, free housing and meals during programming and opportunities to fulfill course, clinical or internship requirements.

Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

Robert Eugene Barnes, March 29
Barbara Elaine DePue, March 29
John Warren Valentine, March 29
Robert Daryl Russell, March 31
Ronald Eugene Spath, April 2
Gloria Lee Adkins, April 3

View Full Obituaries at www.dignitymemorial.com

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www.wappner.com

Shakespeare Acting Workshop planned for April 12 at OSU

The Mansfield Shakespeare Company is inviting community members to take their first step into the world of Shakespeare or enhance their current skills with a special acting workshop designed to help performers prepare for diction and voice projection in an outdoor performance environment.

This free workshop will place a special emphasis on the script of Hamlet as a precursor to our auditions for this summer's production. It is intended to benefit all performers — whether they have never worked with Shakespeare's language or have experience performing in his plays.

It will be held Saturday, April 18, from 12–3 pm in The Ohio State University Mansfield Founders Auditorium in Ovalwood Hall.

The workshop will provide a welcoming and supportive environment where participants can learn practical tools for approaching Shakespeare's text with confidence. Through guided exercises and discussion, attendees will explore how to understand Shakespeare's language, interpret verse, and bring characters to life in an outdoor environment.

Participants will gain an introduction to techniques actors use when preparing Shakespearean roles, including understanding the structure of the verse, breaking down complex passages, and applying modern acting approaches to classical text. The workshop will also offer helpful insights into the audition process for Hamlet, giving participants the chance to ask questions and build confidence before stepping into the audition room.

This event is designed for performers of all experience levels, with a special emphasis on newcomers who may be curious about Shakespeare but unsure where to begin. Whether someone has years of acting experience or is simply interested in trying something new, the workshop aims to demystify Shakespeare and make the material approachable and fun.

Light refreshments will be included.

The Mansfield Shakespeare Company encourages anyone considering auditioning for *Hamlet* to attend, but participation in the workshop is not required in order to audition.

The Mansfield Shakespeare Company (founded in 2023) is a non-profit organization dedicated to making Shakespeare accessible to the community in a fun and engaging way. Their mission is to produce high-quality cultural experiences for Mansfield and surrounding communities through performances and interactive events centered around the works of William Shakespeare.

For more information about the Mansfield Shakespeare Company, upcoming auditions, and events follow them on social media at https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61550574027909 or https://www.instagram.com/mansfieldshakes/.

RICHLAND NEWHOPE donated clear backpacks filled with sensory and calming items to the Mansfield Police Department. These backpacks include helpful tools such as fidget spinners, sunglasses, headphones, stress balls, coloring books and more. They are designed to support individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities during interactions with officers that may be times of stress or sensory overload. This contribution will help officers make a meaningful difference in how they are able to serve and care for members of the community.

National Safe Digging Month observed

April is National Safe Digging Month, and Columbia Gas is reminding Ohio residents and contractors to contact 811 before starting any digging project to help prevent damage to underground natural gas pipelines and other buried utilities.

Spring weather brings an increase in outdoor projects such as planting trees, installing fences, building decks and other construction work. Striking a buried natural gas line can result in serious injury, service disruption and costly repairs. Many of these outcomes are preventable by contacting 811.

"Our pipelines serve communities across Ohio every day, often unnoticed," said Bob Heidorn, Columbia Gas of Ohio President & COO. "Contacting 811 before digging helps ensure those systems continue to operate safely while protecting families, neighbors and first responders."

Calling 811 or visiting OUPS.org at least two business days before starting a project gives utility crews time to mark underground lines with color-coded flags or spray paint. Even small or shallow projects require an 811 request, as pipelines may be buried just inches below the surface due to erosion, landscaping changes or prior construction.

If a natural gas line is damaged or a gas leak is suspected, individuals should STOP work immediately, LEAVE the area, and CALL 911 and Columbia Gas at 1-800-344-4077 from a safe location.

For more information about safe digging practices, visit OUPS.org or ColumbiaGasOhio.com.

Support Local Coffee Shops

Visit a featured location below, then email your order and visit date to tribune.courier.traci@gmail.com for a chance to win a $20 coffee gift card!

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goldberryroasting.com

Bloom Nutrition & Drink Bar
126 East Main Street,
W 2nd St Rear, Ashland

4th Street Coffee House
1996 W 4th St, Ontario

Pump and Grind
586 Park Avenue East,
OH-430, Mansfield

How Ya Brewin'?
Mobile Coffee Trailer
Bellville | 419-210-3737

Fresh Grounds Coffee House
1621 W 4th St, Ontario

Brew'd Coffee & Donuts
7 Main St, Hayesville

Bubble Bean And Sweets
44 East Main St., Shelby

The Pickwick Place Cafe and Market
1875 North Sandusky
Avenue, Bucyrus

Revive Coffee Bar
1201 Mill Rd, Bellville
revivecoffeebar.com

Marando's Cafe
marandoscafe.com
@marandoscafe
330-347-7058

The Cafe at Arbor Creek Gardens and Floral
3052 Mabee Rd, Ontario

Advertise Your Business Here

Pronto Pizza and Coffee
914 Ashland Rd, Mansfield
(419) 589-7777

Advertise Your Business Here

Earth Day events planned at parks

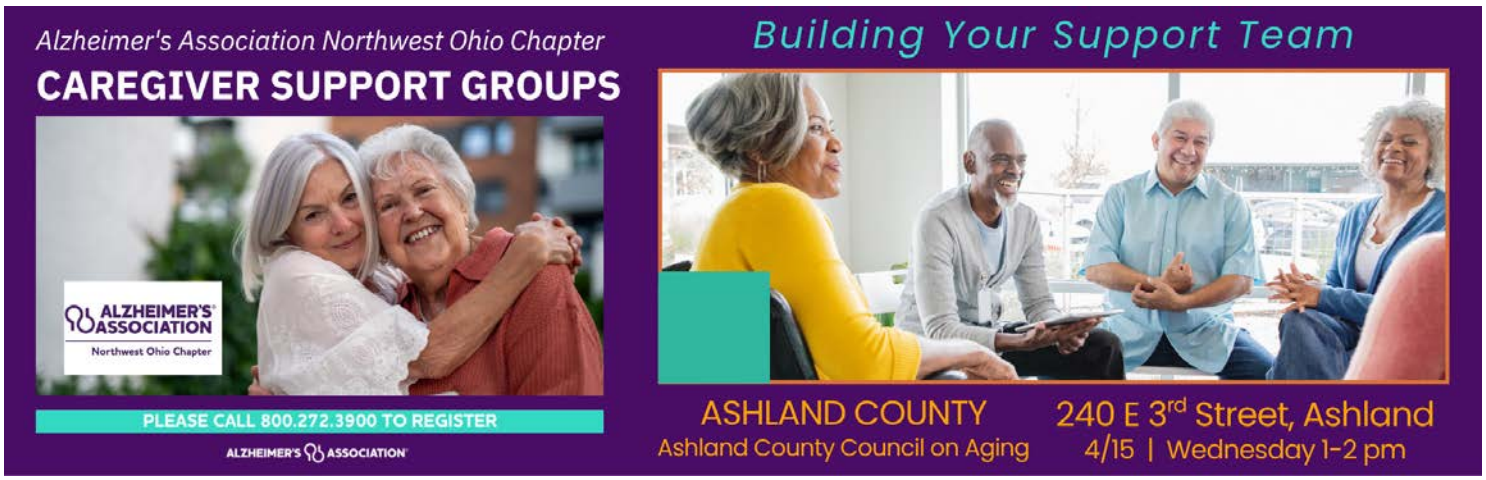
The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) is inviting residents and visitors to celebrate Earth Day 2026 with a series of community-focused events designed to promote environmental stewardship and appreciation for the region's natural resources.

"Earth Day is an opportunity for our communities to come together and take simple, meaningful actions that have a lasting impact on our watershed," said Dana Ohman, MWCD chief of conservation. "In addition to our public tree giveaway, we're proud to extend this effort into local schools, distributing more than 3,500 native seedlings to students across Ashland, Belmont, Muskingum, Tuscarawas and Noble counties. By putting trees directly into students' hands, we're helping grow a more diverse canopy while teaching the importance of trees in supporting pollinators, managing stormwater, and strengthening our environment for future generations."

A tree giveaway will be held April 18 from 10 am to noon at Atwood, Charles Mill and Tappan Lake Parks. Visitors to these parks will receive free oak seedlings which are especially valuable, serving as a vital food source for caterpillars and helping intercept and store rainwater.

The Earth Day Clean-up at the Lake will help keep parks pristine by gathering and disposing of trash around the lake. In return, participants will receive a free night of camping. Events occur April 18 at Atwood, Clendening, Charles Mill and Tappan; and April 25, at Piedmont, Pleasant Hill and Seneca.

Bellville Flooding during the morning of April 4 • Photos By Mark Shutt



She Fought to Live — Now She Runs to Inspire

By Traci Little

LEXINGTON — For Lauren Virginia Speelman, every mile tells a story. It's a story that began long before finish lines and marathon bibs—when she was a standout student-athlete at Lexington High School, graduating in 2019 with a love for sports, competition, and the outdoors. Whether on the basketball court, volleyball court, or hiking local trails, Lauren lived life in constant motion.

But at just 22 years old, during her junior year at Miami University, that momentum came to a sudden halt.

She was diagnosed with stage IV Hodgkin lymphoma.

What followed was a battle that would test every part of her strength—physically, mentally, and spiritually.

"I went from being an active young person… to someone hooked up to an oxygen tank and needing a wheelchair just to get to the bathroom," Lauren shared.

For eight months, she underwent intense chemotherapy at Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center. Nearly a year of her life was consumed by treatments, medications, and the daily toll of fighting to survive.

"It was pills, IVs, and throwing up anything I tried to eat," she said.

But through it all, she held on—to faith, to grit, and to the belief that her story wasn't over.

A Second Chance at Life

When Lauren entered remission, she didn't just return to life—she redefined it.

"With everything I do now, I do it for the girl I was when I couldn't do anything," she said. "For the girl in the wheelchair who wanted to be running with her friends."

That mindset became her fuel.

At first, progress was measured in the smallest victories. A walk to the end of the street. A few steps farther than the day before. Then a tenth of a mile.

Her lungs burned. Her legs felt heavy. But she kept going.

"One lamppost at a time," she said.

Eventually, those steps turned into miles.

Running Toward Purpose

Now nearly three years cancer-free, Lauren has turned her recovery into something far greater than personal achievement—she's running for others.

In November 2026, she will take on one of the most prestigious races in the world: the New York City Marathon.

With an acceptance rate of less than 1%, the race is a dream for runners everywhere. Lauren earned her place through First Descents, an organization dedicated to supporting young adult cancer survivors through adventure, community, and healing.

LAUREN SPEELMAN during a graduation trip to Paris, celebrating her senior year of high school.

"It's an absolute dream," she said.

Through First Descents, Lauren will also travel to North Carolina this spring to connect with other survivors—individuals who understand firsthand what it means to fight, to endure, and to rebuild.

Her journey, however, doesn't stop at the starting line.

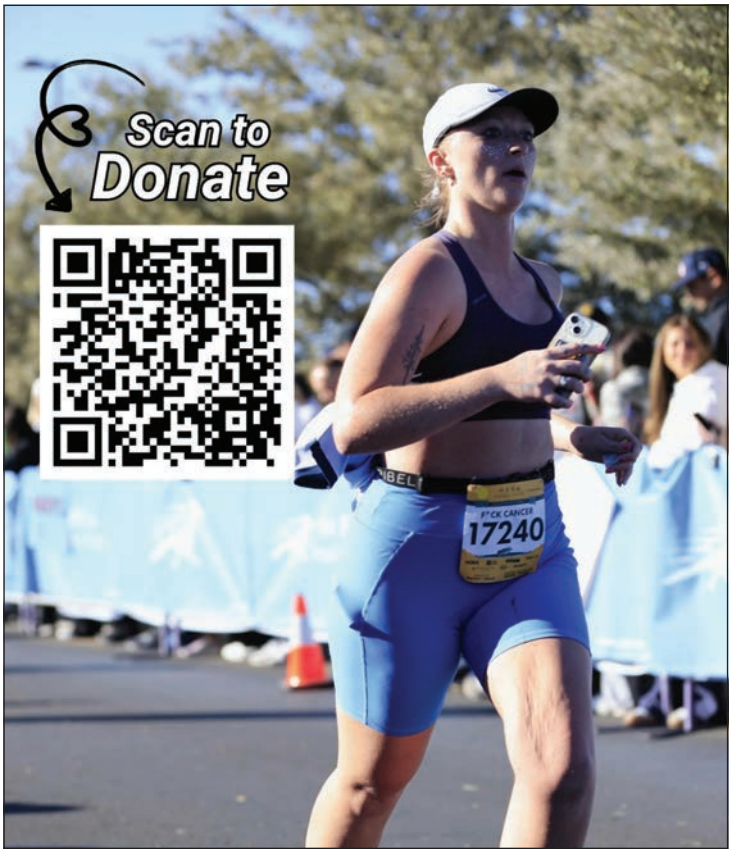
As part of her commitment, Lauren is raising $5,000 to support young adult cancer survivors—helping provide the same sense of community and empowerment that helped her reclaim her life.

A Life Lived with Intention

Lauren's story is not just about surviving cancer; it's about what comes after. It's about choosing gratitude in the face of hardship. It's about honoring the version of herself who once struggled just to stand. And it's about recognizing the extraordinary gift of ordinary moments.

"Getting to wake up every day is a privilege," she said. "Don't take it for granted."

(Continued on Page 9)



Mesa Marathon, Feb. 14, 2026

•She Fought to Live — Now She Runs to Inspire

(Continued from Page 8)

Today, Lauren continues to run, hike, and live with a renewed sense of purpose—each step is a reminder of how far she's come, and how much life still lies ahead. She's an inspiration to many—having completed a marathon and about a dozen half marathons. She's also hiked 35 of the 64 national parks. Her goal is to hike all of them before she's 30 years old. To celebrate her upcoming birthday, she booked a plane ticket to Iceland in July.

For those who wish to support her journey to New York City and her fundraising efforts for First Descents, donations can be made at her official fundraising page.

For Lauren Speelman, this marathon is more than a race.

It's a celebration. It's a mission. Above all, it's proof that even the hardest roads can lead to something extraordinarily beautiful.

To support Lauren's journey and fundraising efforts, visit https://support.firstdescents.org/fundraiser/7082822

ONTARIO LIONS PANCAKE DAY

Saturday, April 18, 2026 • 6:30 am to Noon
at Ontario High School

Tickets: $7 • Age 6 & Under Free

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Proceeds support local and world-wide Lions projects

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Downtown Shelby momentum continues with redevelopment

The Shelby Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) has shared that the Milliron Foundation has acquired 19 Mansfield Avenue, marking a significant step forward in the continued revitalization of downtown Shelby.

The redevelopment will include extensive renovations over the next three years, transforming the building into approximately 24 market-rate residential units, including a mix of one- and two-bedroom apartments. Once complete, the project will expand housing options and support long-term economic growth.

"We are thankful to continue making investments in projects that will have a lasting impact on the future of our community," said Karl Milliron, COO of the Milliron Foundation. "This project reflects the type of intentional investment needed to strengthen downtown and create new opportunities for Shelby's future."

While led and funded by the Milliron Foundation, the project directly supports the Shelby CIC's broader vision to reinvigorate downtown, increase housing availability, and return underutilized properties to productive use.

"This project represents exactly the type of strategic investment our community needs," said Cody Albert, president of the Shelby Community Improvement Corporation. "Market-rate housing is critical to supporting workforce growth by attracting new residents and sustaining our local businesses. We are excited to see this property transition into a vibrant residential asset in the heart of our community."

The transaction was made possible in part through the cooperation and support of the seller, Randy Sampsel, along with the expertise of Dzugan Real Estate, whose partnership played a key role in bringing the deal to fruition. His efforts underscore the collaborative efforts that continue to drive meaningful progress in Shelby.

"We are incredibly grateful to the Milliron Foundation for their unprecedented investment in Shelby. Their commitment is not only transforming a key property in our downtown, but also helping to shape the future of our community in a meaningful and lasting way. This level of partnership and belief in Shelby is truly exceptional, and we are proud to work alongside them" said Mayor Steve Schag, City of Shelby.

The redevelopment of 19 Mansfield Avenue is expected to further enhance the walkability and vibrancy of downtown Shelby, complementing nearby investments and contributing to a more dynamic and livable community.

The Shelby CIC remains committed to supporting projects that align with the city's long-term vision for growth, housing, and economic development.

The Shelby Community Improvement Corporation is a public-private partnership dedicated to advancing economic development, supporting strategic real estate projects, and enhancing the quality of life in Shelby, Ohio. Through collaboration with local partners, the CIC works to attract investment, facilitate redevelopment, and implement initiatives that strengthen the community.

Madison Local Schools' kindergarten registration begins

Kindergarten registration for the Madison Local School District will be held April 1–30. Children are eligible to attend kindergarten during the 2026–'27 school year if they are five years of age on or before Madison Local School District's first day of instruction, Aug. 20, 2026. All kindergarten students for the 2026–'27 school year will attend Madison Primary School, located at 700 S. Illinois Ave., formerly Madison South Elementary.

The first step in the registration process is to complete the online registration through FinalForms. The registration link can be found at www.mlsd.net under Madison FinalForms or go to https://madisonmansfield-oh.finalforms.com.

Those without internet access or who need help can schedule an appointment to complete the online forms at Madison Primary School by callling 419-522-4319. Select the 2026–'27 school year in FinalForms when registering a child. Registration will open on April 1, to complete FinalForms.

Open enrollment for the 2026–'27 school year will be held from May 1–30. Non-residents of Madison must receive formal approval before proceeding with registration. Its is strongly advised that families enroll in their home district as a contingency until open enrollment status is confirmed.

Current Madison South Preschool students moving into kindergarten will need to log into their FinalForms account and complete the 2026–'27 forms. To receive updated documents, contact Sue Ernsberger, Madison Primary School Administrative Assistant, at 419-522-4319 or sernsberger@madisonrams.net.

Once all online forms are completed, drop-off the required documents at Madison Primary School, between 9 am and 3 pm, Monday through Friday. Please note that the district is on spring break from March 30 to April 6. Madison South Elementary, soon to be Madison Primary School, will be closed during this time.

Documents needed for registration are student birth certificate, parent/guardian driver's license, custody papers (if applicable) date stamped and signed by the court, parent/guardian proof of residency (see final forms for approved list) and immunization records.

Required immunizations for school attendance are four doses of DPT (five doses if four were given before fourth birthday), three or more doses of polio with final dose after fourth birthday, three doses of Hepatitis B and two MMR, twoVarivax (chicken pox) or history of having disease.

•Richland County unites to launch Child Abuse Prevention Month

(Continued from Front Page)

The program, emceed by Mansfield City Councilman Aurelio Diaz, featured a dynamic lineup of speakers and performances that helped create a meaningful and uplifting atmosphere. Ohio State Representative Melanie Miller delivered a heartfelt keynote address underscoring both the urgency and hope behind prevention efforts.

"There's nothing better than springtime in Ohio. It brings warmer weather, blooming flowers, and the excitement of summer ahead. But for many children, no matter how bright and sunny it is outside, their world can still feel dark and scary, Miller said. "That's why we must speak up for kids—so they can experience brighter days."

She continued, expressing hope for those who have suffered or are still suffering, and gratitude for those working to make a difference.

"I am truly inspired by the work of everyone in this room. Together, we have the opportunity to protect our children's tomorrows. You are making a difference in the lives of our young people — not just this month, but every month. God bless you, and God bless Ohio's children."

A moving vocalist performance by Teana Sykes, of Rise Up, created an emotional urgency to rise up and take part in the fight against child abuse. She is an author, speaker and creator of Tea Talk, and a graduate of Mansfield Senior High School. Live, upbeat music was also provided by Nyte Flyte Entertainment, featuring Jeff Angelini, added to the event's motivating atmosphere.

Faith and community leadership were also highlighted as Senior Pastor Raymond Cochran Jr. of Oasis of Love Church closed the rally with heartfelt remarks centered on unity, compassion and collective action — encouraging attendees to remain steadfast in their commitment to protecting children. He closed with a prayer for the children of our community and the cause.

The rally also welcomed several special guests, including Miss Ontario 2025 Morgyn Beasley and Miss South Central's Teen 2026 Addison Schroeder, along with student athletes from Shelby High School, Mansfield St. Peter's, Mansfield Senior High School, Mansfield Christian School, and Lexington High School. Their presence underscored the importance of youth engagement and community solidarity.

The Mansfield City School District Tyger mascot made a special appearance, bringing smiles, high fives, and moments of joy to attendees — adding a sense of celebration to an important cause.

Support from local law enforcement was evident throughout the event, including participation from the Mansfield Police Department's Community Policing Section, which proudly signed and displayed the "Together We Protect Their Tomorrows" pledge—reinforcing that child safety is a shared responsibility.

Throughout the morning, RCCS Executive Director Tara Lautzenhiser emphasized that prevention requires a united effort from families, educators, neighbors, faith communities, and local organizations. She also spoke about ongoing local efforts to improve foster care in the community.

"If you know someone—or if you feel called to care for a child in need — please contact us, and we will help guide you in that direction," Lautzenhiser said. "This year's focus is centered on prevention — how we can come together as a community, as coaches, businesses, and faith leaders, to prevent trauma before it ever begins. Prevention happens in everyday small moments. They aren't loud or dramatic, and they don't often make the news, but they matter. It's not one single moment, but a hundred small ones—a check-in, a helping hand — that can make all the difference. One simple act of support can prevent a family from reaching a point of crisis. It's not just on RCCS caseworkers — it takes all of us working together as a community."

The message echoed among speakers and attendees alike: the focus is not only how to respond to abuse — but how to prevent it before it begins.

Beyond the rally, the Richland County Juvenile Court's CASA/GAL program continues to play a vital role in supporting children facing abuse and neglect. Through trained volunteers appointed by Judge Steve McKinley, CASA advocates serve as a voice for children in court, representing their best interests. The program currently serves approximately 330 children annually and continues to seek volunteers.

With its strong turnout, uplifting messages and a visible show of unity, Wednesday's kickoff rally set a powerful reminder for us all during the month ahead—when a community stands together, it can create safer, stronger futures for its children.

As April unfolds, RCCS encourages residents to stay engaged—whether by supporting local initiatives, signing the "Stand Up for Children" pledge at richlandcountychildrenservices.org, or simply speaking up. Reports of suspected abuse or neglect can be made 24 hours a day through Richland County Children Services. If you see something, say something. Report concerns 24/7 to 419-774-4100.

Photos By Traci Little

Ontario High School Third Quarter Highest Honors

Seniors

Juniors

Sophomores

Freshmen

Domestic Violence Shelter announces new board officers

The Domestic Violence Shelter (DVS), one of the first three domestic violence shelters established in the state of Ohio, proudly announces its newly elected Board Officers and the addition of two new Board Members. Founded in 1978, the Domestic Violence Shelter has served as a vital community resource for nearly five decades, providing safety, education, and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and related forms of abuse throughout the region.

Originally opened by a group of concerned citizens to meet an urgent need for emergency shelter, the Domestic Violence Shelter has grown into a fully functioning social services agency.

Today, the organization operates from a facility of more than 10,000 square feet with 16 client rooms, serving up to 48 individuals at a time. Services now extend far beyond emergency housing to include a 24-hour crisis hotline and chat, case management, legal advocacy, sexual assault services, children's programming, human trafficking support, campus advocacy, community education and volunteer-driven response programs.

The Shelter is accredited by the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence, reflecting its commitment to survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and best-practice service delivery.

In 2025 the Shelter provided 10,245 nights of safety to 281 survivors, children and their pets, responded to more than 500 crisis hotline calls from individuals seeking immediate support and sat at 169 hospital bedsides of survivors of sexual assault — both children and adults — offering advocacy, information and compassionate presence during critical moments of care.

These outcomes reflect the Shelter's dedication to meeting survivors where they are and responding to violence with both immediate safety and long-term support.

Alicia Bailey has been named board president and is the director of human resources and finance at Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"It is an honor to serve as Board President for an organization with such a strong history and life-saving mission," said Bailey. "I look forward to working with fellow board members and staff to ensure the Shelter remains a place of safety, empowerment, and hope for survivors and families in our community."

Becky Harlan is vice president and is also vice president of operations at Sutton Bank.

"The Domestic Violence Shelter has been a trusted resource in our community for decades," said Harlan. "I am proud to support its work and help advance sustainable operations that allow the Shelter to continue meeting the evolving needs of survivors."

Kendra Boggs is treasurer and also coordinator of student financial aid and student success administration at The Ohio State University.

"Strong financial stewardship is essential to fulfilling the Shelter's mission," said Boggs. "I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as Treasurer and to help safeguard the resources that make these critical services possible."

Susan Gentille is secretary and a marketer/developer.

"I am excited to serve in the role of Secretary and support clear governance, accountability, and communication," said Gentille. "The Shelter's work is vital, and I am honored to contribute to its success."

The Domestic Violence Shelter also welcomes two new board members whose professional expertise and commitment to community service strengthen the organization's leadership.

Sonya Morgan is the owner of Pinnacle Building Services.

"I am honored to join the Board of the Domestic Violence Shelter and contribute my experience in finance and accounting, strategic planning, and event planning," said Morgan. "I am passionate about supporting strong, mission-driven organizations and look forward to helping advance the Shelter's long-term vision and sustainability."

Luke M. Wendling is a fiscal specialist for Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

"Serving on the Board of the Domestic Violence Shelter is an opportunity I value deeply," said Wendling. "I am eager to apply my background in finance and accounting, human resources, communications, advocacy and public policy, strategic planning, and community outreach to support survivor-centered services and strengthen community engagement. In addition, my training in supporting domestic violence survivors and families has given me a deeper understanding of trauma-informed care and the critical role community agencies play in creating pathways to safety and healing. I am committed to working alongside fellow board members, staff, and community partners to help ensure the Shelter has the resources and visibility it needs to continue providing safety, empowerment, and hope to survivors and their families."

Colleen Rice, executive director of the Domestic Violence Shelter, emphasized the importance of strong governance and community trust.

"Since opening its doors in 1978, the Domestic Violence Shelter has remained committed to building a peaceful community by providing safety, education, and supportive services," said Rice. "The impact we saw in 2025—from thousands of nights of safe shelter to hospital advocacy and crisis response—demonstrates both the ongoing need for these services and the importance of accredited, high-quality care. Our Board's leadership ensures we continue this work with integrity, accountability, and compassion."

The mission of the Domestic Violence Shelter is to build a peaceful community by providing safety, education, and supportive services while empowering survivors and those affected by domestic violence and sexual assault. An Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence–accredited organization, the Shelter delivers comprehensive, trauma-informed services designed to address immediate safety needs while supporting long-term healing, independence, and prevention.

Brightspeed brings free books to communities across ten states

In many rural and underserved communities, access to books isn't just limited; it's miles away. One year after launching its Little Free Library partnership, Brightspeed is helping change that reality, installing 22 free book exchanges across 10 states in communities identified as "book deserts."

Working alongside local volunteers, the nation's third-largest fiber builder has placed the bright yellow libraries in neighborhoods where access to literacy resources is often scarce. Now families in towns across Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and North Carolina have access to free books 24/7.

"Access to books is fundamental to continued education, opportunity and connection within any thriving community," says Tali Kulbeda, head of local marketing and partnerships at Brightspeed. "We're proud of the progress made in just one year, thanks to the dedication from local stewards and residents who have joined us in cutting the ribbon of each new library and donated books to support their neighbors."

A Little Free Library was installed in Mansfield.

Each library is maintained by a local steward – a resident, small business owner or community organization – who helps keep the library stocked and books accessible. In many communities, the boxes have quickly become informal gathering points, where neighbors exchange stories as often as they exchange books.

For information visit https://littlefreelibrary.tfaforms.net/28.

The Mansfield/Richland County Public Library has compiled a list of local Little Free Library locations. They are available at the 179th Cyberspace Wing, 1947 Harrington Memorial Rd., Mansfield; Gorman Nature Center, 2295 Lexington Ave., Mansfield; Lucas Monroe Township Memorial Park, Lucas Perrysville Rd, Lucas; Marshall Park at the Playscape, 3375 Milligan Rd., Ontario; Mechanics Bank, 674 Free Rd., Shiloh; Olivesburg General Store, 4778 State Rt. 545, Ashland; and Shiloh Village Office, 13 Main Street West, Shiloh.

New guidance supports transparency, consumer trust and American ranchers with "Product of the USA" labeling

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke L. Rollins announced the launch of a national public awareness campaign to inform meat, poultry, and egg producers of the "Product of USA" voluntary labeling standard which went into effect on Jan. 1, 2026, and increases consumer understanding of what the label means.

"Our great patriot ranchers and producers grow, raise, and harvest the world's safest, most affordable, and abundant food supply. American consumers want to support America by buying American and this label will strengthen our food supply chain through transparency, fairness, and trust," said USDA Secretary Rollins.

"This new standard policy ensures producers who invest in a fully American supply chain can compete fairly, and it gives consumers the confidence they deserve about the food they bring home."

"When we choose to purchase from American producers, we get a superior product while supporting the hardworking family farms who put it all on the line every day to feed, clothe, and fuel our nation," said SBA Administrator Loeffler. "Amid President Trump's work to end years of unfair competition and eliminate the massive red tape that has crushed domestic agriculture, Made in America is finally making a comeback."

"Today, on National Agriculture Day, I urge all Americans to join me in support of the hardworking farmers and ranchers who anchor the U.S. food supply chain that is so vital to keeping our nation strong, safe, and healthy."

"Our farmers and ranchers are essential to putting real food back at the center of the American plate and delivering on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans," said HHS Secretary Kennedy. "'Product of the USA' labeling puts American producers first, gives families clear, honest information, and empowers them to choose food raised right here at home."

"U.S. producers are the best in the world, and produce the highest-quality products," said North Dakota Senator Hoeven. "A 'Product of USA' label benefits our ranchers and provides transparency and confidence for consumers. We appreciate Secretary Rollins and the Trump administration for their efforts to support our farmers, ranchers and rural communities."

Under this standard, the "Product of USA" label is reserved exclusively for meat, poultry, and egg products from animals that were born, raised, harvested, and processed in the United States. The claim is voluntary, but companies using it must meet this transparent and verifiable requirement.

This ends the prior practice which allowed imported products to carry the claim after minimal processing and strengthens consumer confidence by aligning with what Americans expect and demand.

Since 2017, the United States has lost over 17% of family farms, more than 100,000 operations over the last decade. The national herd is at a 75-year low while consumer demand for beef has grown 9% over the past decade.

In October 2025, Secretary Rollins released the USDA Plan to Fortify the American Beef Industry that focuses on rebuilding domestic capacity, improving transparency across the supply chain, and ensuring U.S. ranchers can compete on a level playing field.

The announcement on enforcement and promotion of the strengthened "Product of USA" label is a key deliverable under this initiative, advancing the Trump Administration's priorities of fairness, competition, and consumer trust. Learn more at productofusa.gov.

KCCC awarded $25,000 from the Gene Haas Foundation

Knox County Career Center (KCCC) was awarded $25,000 from the Gene Haas Foundation (GHF) as a grant to support scholarships along with additional authorized uses of the grant funds.

Scholarships are to be awarded to students who are currently enrolled or will be enrolling in a CNC training program or Engineering program with an emphasis on CNC technology and designed for manufacturability; credit and non-credit training classes are eligible. The recipients of these scholarships will be determined by the program instructor or an advisory committee which includes the program instructor.

There are also additional authorized uses for these grand funds. A "toolkit" required to become a CNC machinist, which may include small hand tools like micrometers, calipers, and safety gear, may be purchased by the school and then awarded as a gift to the students to be retained by the recipients upon completion of your program. Up to $3,000 per competition type may be used for participating in SkillsUSA-CNC Competition or ProjectMFG-CNC Competition.

Tuition may be provided for a student to attend manufacturing-related training, summer camp, boot camp, or related CNC training at a career center or community college to introduce students to programs or careers in manufacturing. Up to $1,500 of these funds (per attendee) may be used for your CNC Educator(s) and/or Engineering instructor(s) to attend the 19th Annual HTEC Conference July 27–30.

Joe LaFevre, Precision Machining instructor at KCCC, commented, "We are honored as a program and a school to be awarded this grant! It is continually clear that Haas Automation works very hard to impact students around our country and we are just beyond grateful for this grant!"

OWU students spend break in service to others

Two teams of Ohio Wesleyan University students spent a week helping others as part of OWU's annual Spring Break Service Week program.

Before the teams left, and again at a return celebration, they received blessings from University Chaplain Chad Johns, director of Spring Break Service Week. A 2002 Ohio Wesleyan graduate, Johns annually shares a traditional Franciscan blessing to guide the teams in their journeys.

The teams traveled between March 7 and 15, and gathered together March 25 to share images and insights from their experiences.

One team responded to devastating hurricanes, and worked with SBP, a nonprofit co-founded by 1995 OWU graduate Zack Rosenburg, to aid with the clean-up process as residents seek to rebuild their homes and lives.

Azariyah Polk of Mansfield-was on the interfaith team which worked with Lakota Youth Development and continued Ohio Wesleyan's long-term mission to rebuild Lakota-Anglo relationships through respectful conversation, deep critical reflection and dedicated service.

MANSFIELD ALTRUSA CLUB grants money yearly to Madison Adult Career Center for scholarships. This year four students each received $500 to help cover the cost of their education. Students were nominated by staff and scholarships are awarded to those who exemplify Altrusa principles. Scholarships were awarded to Jessica Hoffman, Tyler Fraley, Kelsey Henry and Whitney Leavitt. Staff and scholarship winners were invited to attend Altrusa's April luncheon where the members learned about the students and programs offered at MACC. Pictures are Altrusa member Candy Brenner, scholarship winner Kelsey Henry and MACC staff Crystal McMillen and Lisa Miracle.

Parade will celebrate prayer

The National Day of Prayer will be celebrated on May 7 with a parade in Mansfield.

The event, sponsored by Godsfield, will line-up at Penn Avenue beginning at 5 pm. The parade will start at 6 pm.

A service will be held in South Park, 100 Brinkerhoff Ave., at 7 pm. There will be a time of public worship and prayer and ministry.

Visit https://www.facebook.com/events/100-brinkerhoff-ave-mansfield-oh-44906-3238-united-states/national-day-of-prayer-parade/1677065993331490/for more information on the event or to sign-up for parade participation.

Some churches will be bringing bagged meals and hygiene products to pass out to those at the park.

MISS ONTARIO MORGYN BEASLEY and Junior Miss Ontario Kenley Scott helped during the Ontario Community Events annual egg hunt at the Ontario Center (formerly Richland Mall).

Teddy Bear Concert brings the tale of Goldilocks to young audiences

The Renaissance Performing Arts Association is delighted to present *Goldilocks and The Three Bears,* the next installment of its beloved Teddy Bear Concert Series, on Sunday, April 26, at 2:30 pm at Theatre 166, located next to the historic Renaissance Theatre.

This musical reimagining of the timeless fairy tale is designed especially for children ages 2–10 and their families. *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* presents the familiar fairy tale through music and narration, allowing the audience to follow Goldilocks's journey into the Bears' home. The story unfolds through songs and storytelling,

The performance concludes with the return of the Bear family and Goldilocks's realization about respecting others' homes and belongings.

Teddy Bear Concerts are crafted with young audiences in mind, offering a relaxed atmosphere with low sound levels and sensory-friendly spaces, ensuring that every child can enjoy the magic of the performance in comfort.

The concerts encourage laughter, participation and imagination, creating a family-friendly experience.

Tickets are $5 and can be purchased at rentickets.org or by calling 419-522-2726.

LOOKING BACK • THIS WEEK IN TRIBUNE-COURIER HISTORY

April. 8, '04

Submitted Photo

ONTARIO TEAM WINS TOURNEY – Wyatt Clemens posted a 4-0 shutout in goal to help Brian Gates Insurance defeated Omnisource Corp. in the Northern Ohio Junior Inline Hockey League Tournament championship game. Leading the way for Gates were Kirby Clemens with two goals and an assist, Joey Phillips with two goals, Ryan Earhart with two assists and Ben Wright with an assist. The team finished the season with a 12-3 record. Members of the team are, front, Ben Wright, Mitchell Papst, Wyatt Clemens and Zachary Pyle; back, Sam Jeremy, Mike Markle, Joey Phillips, Kirby Clemens, coach Greg Clemens, Ryan Earhart and Tyler Gates.

April. 5, '90

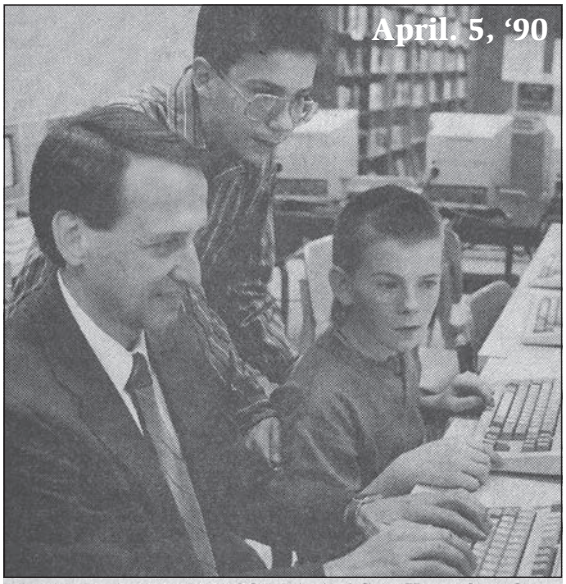
George Billman

JEFF BAKER OF LEXINGTON gets out of the blocks well in the 200-meter dash last Tuesday against Mansfield Senior High School. The Lexington boys surprised the Tygers, outscoring them 69-62 for an early-season victory.

April. 12, '90

Marc Stumbo

MISS LEXINGTON 1990 Joy Bickimer (front right) is pictured with first runner-up Joy Tomsic (back right), second runner-up Dawn Grabowski (back left), third runner-up Shane Jenkins (front left) and fourth runner-up Jennifer Heichel (back center). The young ladies were chosen from a field of 18 contestants at the 13th annual Miss Lexington Pageant held Saturday evening in the Lexington High School auditorium.



April. 5, '90

ONTARIO MIDDLE SCHOOL Principal Gene Hancock works at one of the school's computers with students Stephen Smieszek and Steve Hammer.

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CLASSIFIEDS

LEGAL NOTICE

The following is a succinct summary of the legislation adopted by the Council of the City of Ontario, at their special meeting held on March 23, 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.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-04 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE- SAFETY DIRECTOR TO ADVERTISE FOR COMPETITIVE BIDS AND AWARD A CONTRACT FOR THE 2026 CITY OF ONTARIO PAVING PROGRAM, REPEALING RESOLUTION NO. 26-03, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-07 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ONTARIO CODIFIED ORDINANCE CHAPTER 925- SEWERS, SECTION 925.05-BUILDING SEWERS AND CONNECTIONS BY AMENDING SUBPARAGRAPH (Q), AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-08 – AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO, OHIO FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2026 AND EXPIRING DECEMBER 31, 2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-10 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING MAYOR, OR HIS DESIGNEE (SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR), TO SIGN A CONTRACT WITH UNDERGROUND UTILITIES, INC. FOR THE 2026 WATERLINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Abbey Beaver
Asst. Clerk of Council
City of Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 4-2, 9, 2026) 48L

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Separate sealed bids for the 2026 Resurfacing Program, Village of Lexington, Ohio will be received by the Village of Lexington, Ohio at the office of the Administrative Director at 44 West Main Street, Lexington, Ohio 44904 until 10:00am, local time Friday April 24, 2026, and then, at said office, publicly opened and read aloud.

Contractors will be required to purchase and download an electronic set of plans and bid documents via the KEM Web Site by visiting https://kemccartney.com/project-bids/. If you would prefer a hard copy be mailed, we will do so upon receipt of payment in the amount of $50.00 per set, along with your UPS or FedEx account number so that shipping charges can be applied to your account. Checks shall be made payable to K.E. McCartney & Associates and all documents become the property of the prospective bidder, with no portion of the payment being refunded.

Should you have any questions during the bidding process please contact jburgholder@kemccartney.com.

The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities. Contract will be awarded based on the lowest and best bid. The Village of Lexington may reject any or all bids on any basis and without disclosure of reason. The failure to make such disclosure shall not result in accrual of any right, claim or cause of action by any unsuccessful bidder against the Village of Lexington.

Each bid must be accompanied by either an Ohio Revised Code Section 153.571 Bid and Performance Payment Bond in an amount equal to 100% of the bid; or, a cashier's check, bid bond, letter of credit to be duly executed by the bidder as principal and having as surety thereon, a surety company approved by the Owner in the amount of 10% of the bid.

Each bid must contain the full name of the party or parties submitting the proposal and all persons interested therein. The Owner intends and requires that this project be completed by August 14, 2026.

Bidders must comply with the prevailing wage rates on Public Improvements in Richland County and Village of Lexington, Ohio as determined by the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services, Wage and Hour Division, 614-644-2239.

Peter L. Them
Administrative Director
Village of Lexington, OH
(T-C 4-9, 16, 2026) 65L

BEXLEY, MAZIE AND JOURNEY won the Ontario Community Events Easter Egg Coloring Contest. Ontario residents were invited to color and show off their best egg coloring art. The prize was a $50 Visa Gift Card.

Scam alert issued for website

Local consumers are being urged to exercise extreme caution when shopping with Monroeluxe, an online apparel retailer claiming to operate out of Akron. Following a surge in suspicious activity and consumer reports, the Better Business Bureau (BBB) officially initiated an investigation into the company on March 20, 2026.

A recent consumer report highlights the risks associated with the site. One victim reported losing $86 after receiving a low-quality dress that did not match the website's description. When the customer attempted to process a return, the company refused to provide a return address, effectively making a refund impossible.

Monroeluxe lists an Akron, OH, address on its website. However, the BBB has confirmed that this address is not a legitimate location.

Monroeluxe is not registered as a legal business entity with the Ohio Secretary of State and the domain Monroeluxe.com is registered through an IT provider based in Xiamen, China.

Those who have engaged in a transaction with this website and suspect fraudulent activity should contact their bank or credit card issuer immediately to initiate a chargeback or dispute the transaction and file a federal report at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.