



TRIBUNE-COURIER

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

news@tribune-courier.com

10.22.26



RICHLAND PREGNANCY SERVICES held a gala with the theme "Written with Purpose" on Oct. 15. (Right photo) Mike Getz, Richland Pregnancy Services Board President, was among the speakers at the event.

RPS gala raises nearly \$180,000 to support local families

Photos and Article By Traci Little

The 2026 Richland Pregnancy Services Gala raised nearly \$180,000 on Oct. 15, drawing approximately 500 attendees in support of the organization's mission. Guests demonstrated their generosity and commitment to the community by supporting an organization that serves local individuals and families.

Held under the theme "Written with Purpose," the annual fund-raising event celebrated the impact of Richland Pregnancy Services (RPS) while highlighting the importance of continued community investment in its work.

In addition to the nearly \$180,000 raised during the gala, corporate underwriters contributed another \$30,000 to cover event expenses. Their generosity ensured that 100% of donations received during the evening could go directly toward serving clients.

The financial success of the event reflected the strong commitment of individuals, businesses and community partners who believe in the organization's mission and the difference its services make in the lives of local individuals and families.

An Evening of Inspiration and Purpose

The evening began with an opening prayer led by RPS Board President Mike Getz, followed by dinner and a ministry update from Executive Director Amy Kahl.

During her remarks, Kahl acknowledged the challenges of serving individuals and families facing difficult circumstances while emphasizing the importance of compassion and perseverance.

"We keep showing up. We keep building. Keep serving. Keep lov-

ing," Kahl told attendees.

Kahl also highlighted the organization's mentoring and support programs, which provide continued encouragement to mothers and fathers navigating unexpected pregnancies.

"Women need to know that they are not alone and that they will not be alone after they choose life," she said.

Guests also heard a client testimony, offering a personal perspective on the impact of the organization's services and the importance of having support during challenging circumstances.

Featured speaker and comedian Tim Boyd entertained attendees with a mixture of laughter and tears as part of the evening's program, which centered on the theme "Written with Purpose."

The celebration concluded with a prayer led by Pastor Raymond Cochran Jr., RPS Board Vice President.

Community Support Makes Gala Success Possible

The success of the 2026 gala was made possible through the generosity of local businesses, organizations and individuals whose financial support continues to strengthen the mission of Richland Pregnancy Services.

Kahl reminded attendees that their contributions represent more than financial support. Each gift helps ensure that Richland Pregnancy Services can continue reaching individuals and families when they need encouragement and assistance.

"But every gift has helped make it possible for RPS to be here, ready to offer hope when a woman needs it most," she said.

(Continued on Page 10)

Elect Robert A.
FRANCO
Richland County Probate Judge

A COMMITMENT TO
FAIRNESS, RESPECT,
AND THE RULE OF LAW.

Experienced Probate and
Real Estate Attorney

LEARN MORE >

PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF ROBERT A. FRANCO, DALE M. LEACH TREASURER

Letter to the Editor

I am blessed to have been raised in this community my entire growing up years. I was a Lexington student for all 13 years, and I am a proud '87 Lex graduate.

My sense of pride comes from the memories I share with my friends that were made possible by the incredible, professional educators and staff who taught and/or mentored me along the way. It was also the bus drivers, janitors, secretaries, cooks, aides, administrators, and the coaches who made me feel special. Many of them have become life-long friends. I can't put a value on the relationships that have been built, how grateful I am to all of them for the impact they've made on my life, and what they continue to mean to me. I can look back with the fondest of memories because of these people, and as an adult, I now understand how it took a strong community supporting us in every facet of our public education system.

After college, I chose to return to "The Village" to begin my adult life. My wife, Teresa, and I chose to have our three children educated here, knowing the quality education that they would receive. We could have found less expensive land with lower taxes elsewhere, but we have built two homes in the district because of the quality educational opportunities we knew our kids would receive. I have been privileged to serve as a Lex educator for the past 22 years and coached 21 seasons of athletics during that time.

"Together, We Are Lex" is a slogan that was adopted by our district leadership to begin the new 2026-'27 school year. It has been a refreshing year of optimism for the future of our schools moving forward. We have always had a rich tradition of excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts. Walk the halls of our new building and you can see it. Talk to anyone who has been a part of it and they will tell you. With a new elementary building being built and scheduled to open for our students in less than 2 years, it's even more essential for us to continue to support not only the buildings that we've voted to construct through totally separate, previously approved funds, but the students who will fill those classrooms.

Legendary Coach Woody Hayes said, "You win with people." This is true in any organization. However, we're not talking about just an organization. We're talking about the very heart and the future of our community - our Lexington School District and the children it serves. Please take time to educate yourself and others on the facts of each levy, and join me in voting yes for both levies when we have the opportunity, Tuesday, Nov. 3. On behalf of everyone who has a stake in the game and has made an investment in our young people, directly or indirectly, I thank you in advance for your strong and thoughtful consideration in doing so!

★

Grant Weaver

Dear residents of Lexington Schools,

I'm reaching out to ask for your support of the two ballot issues before the voters of Lexington Schools on November 3rd. These issues are critically needed to maintain Lexington's service to our students, residents and community. We have already accomplished over \$2 million in savings. However, the combination of reduced state funding and inflation continues to outpace our efforts to control costs.

(Continued on Page 21)

THE ENTERTAINMENT EXAMINER

— By Ian Stumbo —

Zach Cregger makes another great movie with his adaptation of the video game *Resident Evil*.

While not related to the Milla Jovovich series, this movie creates its own kind of universe and is great fun.

Austin Abrams is perfectly cast as Bryan, a medical courier transporting an organ to Raccoon City. He is traveling in deadly winter weather while encountering a zombie outbreak.

The movie follows Bryan from location to location as he encounters sick people, creatures and all sorts of obstacles along the way.

Abrams is so great because he portrays Bryan as a hapless, clueless guy and Cregger writes the script with a great deal of funny dialogue as Bryan comments about all the crazy things happening to him.

The special effects and creature makeup is very well done and after the excellent Weapons

last year, Cregger has become a reliable director. Making this movie following one person and one singular story in this world was very smart and makes for an enjoyable movie.

Resident Evil is a fun, quick 90 minutes. Cregger and Abrams give audiences a fun action packed movie

that is sure to satisfy fans of the video game. The only element that divided me was the ending though it seems like there is a sequel to be made after all the money it took in at the box office. Hopefully there is another movie made in this world.



The good neighbor for small business

Call or stop in today



Michelle Gates
Michelle Gates, Agent

2021 Park Avenue West, Suite 100
Ontario, OH 44906

Bus: 419-756-5010
michelle@michellegates.com
www.michellegates.com



State Farm Fire and Casualty Company, State Farm General Insurance Company, Bloomington, IL

State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL

State Farm Lloyds, Richardson, TX

Vol. 66
No. 2

Tribune-Courier

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

PO Box 127, Ontario, OH 44862 • 419-529-2847
news@tribune-courier.com • www.tribune-courier.com
© All Rights Reserved

The Tribune-Courier is published by Stumbo Publishing Co., Inc. Advertisers should check their ad immediately. The Tribune-Courier is not liable for failure to publish an ad or for a typographical error or errors in publication, except that adjustment for Tribune-Courier errors is limited to the cost of that portion of the ad wherein the error occurred. Marc A. Stumbo, publisher; Frank A. Stumbo, president/CEO (1961-2018); Betty E. Stumbo, co-publisher (1961-2017); Jenna M. Wolford, managing editor, general manager and feature/travel writer; Teresa Vore, office manager; Traci Little, photojournalist/advertising representative; Kris Leiter, sports writer; John J. Kirschenheiter, editor (1961-2008); Linda Fulmer, columnist (2005-2014). By-lined stories are opinions of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the position of this newspaper.



News Briefs

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 Nov. 11, with roast turkey being served. A representative of the Alzheimer's Association will visit.

The group will also meet for lunch Wednesday, Nov. 4, at 11 am, at The Local @ 97, St. Rt 97, Lexington.

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

★

The 33rd Annual Crestview Craft Show will be held Saturday, Nov. 21, from 9 am to 3 pm at Crestview Middle School, 1575 St. Rt. 96, Ashland. Proceeds go to support the music department.

★

Downtown Mansfield will host the Halloween Parade at 10 am on Saturday, Oct. 31. The parade will start at the 5-way light at Marion Avenue and Park Avenue West.

Downtown trick-or-treat will be held from 11 am to noon. Local businesses will be opening their doors and handing out candy. Richland Carrousel Park's carrousel will spin in reverse from 2-4 pm.

Citywide trick-or-treat is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 31, from 5-7 pm. Residents who wish to participate are asked to turn on their porch lights. Young children will be out walking throughout the community. Please use extra caution when driving.

★

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

★

The City of Ontario will host a city-wide trick-or-treat night on Saturday, Oct. 31, from 5-6:30 pm

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist of Bellville, 25 Church St., Bellville, will welcome Cassandra Montenegro on Sunday, Oct. 25, at 10:30 am. For information visit www.allsoulsuuohio.org.

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Avenue W., Mansfield, will host a Heritage Organ Concert on Sunday, Oct. 25, at 4 pm.

★

Mayflower Congregational Church, 548 N. McElory Rd., will host a beef goulash dinner on Saturday, Oct. 24, from 4:30 to 6 pm.

The meal will include beef goulash, coleslaw or applesauce, bread, dessert and beverage. Cost is \$10. For information call 419-589-6612.

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Avenue West will be offering senior boxes of non perishable food provided by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank from 10 am to 12 pm or until supplies run out.

This comes with a 30 lb. box of non-perishable food and a two lb. box of cheese. These items are free to those who qualify by age (60+) and low income guidelines. Recipients must have at least one person age 60 or older in the household. The minimum income begins at \$1,995 per month for a one-person household.

These items are available on the fourth Tuesday of each month, year round. The distribution is held in the South Mulberry Street parking lot. The next distribution is Tuesday, Oct. 27

★

With too many books to put out for the recent Fall Used Book Sale, the Friends of the Galion Public Library decided to make a special two-day sale featuring biography, vintage and history categories. Other categories will be offered as well.

The event will take place in the community room at the library, 123 N. Market St., Galion, on Friday, Nov. 6 from 9:30 am to 5 pm and Saturday, Nov. 7 from 10:30 am to 1:30 pm.

All media is offered on donation, and the proceeds go to support programs and materials for the library.

For information call 419-468-3203.

★

The first annual chili cook-off will be held Saturday, Nov. 14 at Trinity Grace Fellowship, 1592 Grace St., Mansfield, Madison area, starting at 1 pm.

Local churches are invited to compete. All members of the public who attend will be eligible to vote on which chili is the best. Tickets are \$5 per person.

★

The Renaissance Theatre will host a Teddy Bear Concert on Saturday, Oct. 24 at 2:30 pm. "The Spooky Old House" will be held in the community room at the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library's Main Location, 43 W. Third St., in Downtown Mansfield.

With audience members sitting alongside the performers, and geared to children ages two through 10, each Teddy Bear concert offers an interactive element as well as a relaxed environment. Small audience sizes, lights up and low sound levels allow audience members with autism and other sensory-sensitivities to be accommodated at this performance. Tickets are free at www.rentickets.org.



Recycling Today to Improve Tomorrow

Formerly Milliron Recycling

BUYERS OF:

aluminum . stainless steel . brass . all scrap iron

commercial & industrial pick-up

2384 St. Rt. 39 | Monday - Friday 8 - 5 | Sat. 8 - 12

419 - 747 - 6522 | 800 - 921 - 0054

We have the blueprint for your big move.

Our experts genuinely love helping people with home loans. So, while they get started on the details, you can plan out your dream kitchen. Deal?



mymechanics.com/mortgages

Subject to credit approval.

Additional terms and conditions apply.

Member FDIC



Ontario Board of Education approves contracts

The Ontario Local School Board of Education met Tuesday, Oct. 13 for an organizational and regular meeting.

Stingel Principal Kimberly Johnson shared an update on the school's new math program, i-Ready Classroom Mathematics.

Devin Osko, fifth grade intervention specialist, resigned and his final day will be Oct. 16. A resignation was also accepted from Cameron Bias, bus driver.

Substitute teachers approved include Jerry King, Stingel, OMS and OHS; Hallie Fraser, Stingel, OMS and OHS; and Ezri Farley, Stingel, OMS. Substitute classified staff includes Sara Walter, OMS/OHS secretary; Olivia Moore, cook/secretary; Mary Llewellyn, cook; Stephanie Hall, OMS custodian; and Ashley Hall, cook/OMS custodian.

Derek Weatherspoon was approved as a bus driver on a one-year contract for the remainder of the 2026-'27 school year.

A memorandum of understanding was reached with OAPSE for a bus driver contract.

Brandon Dixon was approved as a van driver/permanent substitute bus driver at \$20 per hour for 2026-'27.

Extracurricular and supplemental appointments include Derek Shafer, varsity head baseball coach, \$4,567; Karen Kaufman, OMS Activity Coordinator, \$1,578.50; Ryan Ball, OMS Activity Coordinator, \$1,578.50; Wes Turnbaugh, head varsity wrestling coach, five sharing four stipends, \$4,464; Deb Henry, OHS Swim head coach, \$0; Brooke Trumpower, OHS Swim assistant coach, \$7,769; OMS Swim head coach, \$2,524; Howard LaCroix, dive coach, 50% stipend, \$918; Crystal LaCroix, dive coach, 50% stipend, \$918; Meg Mergel, OMS assistant swim coach, 25% stipend, \$573.75; Kenton Cordrey, OHS assistant swim coach, 75% stipend, \$1,978.50; Hope Miller, 8th grade girls basketball coach, \$3,855; Tyler Coley, 8th grade boys basketball coach, \$4,815; and Matt Lautanen, 7th grade boys basketball coach, \$4,815.

A transportation-in-lieu contract was approved for Brandon James and Tana Tuttle for their children attending Cypress High School. The family lives in the Ontario district. The dismissal schedule does not align with Ontario's bus schedule and would require transportation outside the normal schedule.

Christina Dwyer was approved for a transportation contract in lieu of bus transportation.

The board approved a PTO rock-climbing wall in Stingel's multi-purpose room. Added annual insurance cost is \$204.

(Continued on Page 6)

Church Directory

All Souls Unitarian Universalist

25 Church St., Bellville
419-886-3497 • www.allsoulsuuhio.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

Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

Karen Lea Craft, Oct. 11
Arnold Douglas Mullins, Oct. 11
Mary LaSusa, Oct. 12
Linda C. Beach, Oct. 14
Steven Michael Koehler, Oct. 17

View Full Obituaries at www.dignitymemorial.com

Our Family Serving Your Family for Five Generations Since 1872



WAPPNER
Funeral Directors & Crematory

Three Locations to Serve You

Mansfield • 98 South Diamond St. • 419-522-5211
Ontario • 100 S. Lexington-Springmill Rd. • 419-529-2323
Ashland • 308 Claremont Avenue • 419-289-1552

www.wappner.com

Richland County Foundation funds health and housing needs

The Richland County Foundation Board of Trustees approved grants totaling \$1,477,004.99 to nonprofit organizations during its October meeting.

Competitive and field of interest fund grants were approved by the board to four organizations.

Community Health Access Project (CHAP) received a grant to enhance care coordination services for uninsured and underinsured residents in Richland County. Operating through Community Health Workers and the Pathways Community HUB system, CHAP partners with Third Street Family Health Services, ProjectOne, Independent Living Center of North Central Ohio, Rubies Women's Group, Shelby Helpline, and NAMI Richland County to provide comprehensive services including health-care access, housing, transportation, food resources, employment support, behavioral health, and maternal health.

Mansfield Leased Housing Corporation (MLHC) received a grant to expand the Sterkel Heights affordable housing development located off Cook Road in Mansfield. The project will include 90 additional one-bedroom, two-bedroom, and three-bedroom apartments. Developed by MLHC, a nonprofit affiliate of Mansfield Metropolitan Housing Authority, and in partnership with Provident Management, Inc., the project addresses Richland County's documented need for 2,700 additional affordable rental units by 2032, with 50% of Mansfield renters cost burdened. Construction is scheduled for April 2027–October 2028.

Richland Community Development Group received a grant for the "Wings Over Mansfield Air Show" scheduled for next summer at Mansfield Lahm Airport. The event aims to provide family entertainment, honor military service members, educate on aviation history, and inspire youth aviation careers while supporting economic development through local tourism. Event organizers expect 20,000-40,000 spectators which will generate an economic boost through hotel and restaurant reservations.

The Village of Butler received a grant to renovate Frances Hitchman Park next year. The project will create two pickleball courts, resurface existing tennis and basketball courts, and

provide safe recreational facilities compliant with ADA standards. The project also received funding through an Ohio Nature Works Program grant and Worthington Township.

The Board of Trustees awarded 18 scholarships to students attending a career technical education school. The Scholarship Committee implemented a rolling deadline for CTE scholarships to meet various enrollment deadlines. The Foundation wants to help fill the gap between job openings and certified employees as well as lead the way to support workforce development through CTE scholarships.

The board of trustees approved grants from donor-advised funds which allow individuals and families the opportunity to make grant suggestions to favorite charities. Donor Advised Funds are a flexible and convenient alternative to a private foundation. It is also a way to keep charitable contributions anonymous, at the preference of the donor. The Board of Trustees approved grants from donor-advised funds to meet emerging needs at Avita Health Foundation, Catalyst Life Services, Chipewa Music Booster, Crawford Partnership, Community Health Access Project, Crossroads Community Church, Domestic Violence Shelter, First Congregational Church, Friendly House

Association, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Hope Hollow, Kingwood Center Gardens, Love On A Mission, Malabar Farm Foundation, Mankind Murals, Inc., Mansfield Community Playhouse, Mansfield-Richland Area Educational Foundation, Inc., Mid-Ohio Youth Mentoring, North End Community Improvement Collaborative, North Central Ohio Industrial Museum, OhioHealth Foun-

dation, Planned Parenthood of Greater Ohio, Renaissance Performing Arts, Richland Academy of the Arts, Richland County Children's Auxiliary DBA The New Store, Richland County Dog Warden, Salvation Army, St. Anne's Episcopal Church and Third Street Family Health Services.

A special grant was awarded to the National Scleroderma Foundation.



Photo By Mark Shutt



Re-Elect
Cliff Mears
RICHLAND COUNTY
COMMISSIONER

In The November 3rd General Election



The conservative candidate endorsed by the
Richland County Republican Party

Experience That Matters. Leadership You Can Trust.

Paid for by Citizens to Retain Cliff Mears



ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS in Warrior Leadership Council helped serve lunch to community members through the nonprofit People Helping People.

Applications being accepted for Earth Day Native Tree Giveaway Program

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) has announced the opening of applications for an Earth Day Native Tree Giveaway Program, an initiative designed to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.

The program provides regional school students (grades K-12) across the Muskingum River and Duck Creek watersheds with native tree seedlings

to take home and plant. By encouraging students to plant and care for their trees, MWCD aims to foster a lifelong connection to nature while supporting conservation, flood control, and improved water quality throughout the watershed.

"Trees are one of our most valuable natural resources, benefiting air and water quality, stabilizing soil, and providing habitat for wildlife," said Craig But-

ler, Executive Director at MWCD. "This program allows students to experience those benefits firsthand, watching their seedling grow year after year."

Schools within the watershed region, which includes Richland and Ashland counties, are invited to apply to receive between 250 and 1,000 seedlings for distribution to students.

The 2027 giveaway will feature three native species: Chest-

nut Oak, Serviceberry and Tulip Poplar. These trees were selected to maximize biodiversity and support a wide range of growing conditions ranging from small yards to rural properties.

•Ontario Board approves contracts

(Continued from Page 4)

The middle school may establish a seasonal ski club at Snow Trails, supervised by Tina Crim. Families must submit pre-approved permission forms and provide transportation. Estimated participation is 15-20 students. Added annual insurance cost is \$167.

Robin Owen was approved for a \$250 stipend to chaperone the Washington, D.C. field trip.

Board member stipends were approved for participation in the OSBA Capital Conference, Nov. 17-18, 2026.

Jodi Cooper-Wentz was approved for a \$1,000 stipend to coordinate a fall book study, with a maximum of two book studies during 2026-'27 using federal grant funds.

A new fund was established as a middle school ag-business fund. The board established new policies and revised and replaced other policies.

The CamStrong Fund received \$1,176 from the sale of OHS senior parking spots.

Donations were accepted from Dollar General, Stingel school supplies, estimated value \$75; anonymous, \$74 for Key Club; Martin and Brooke Breitingner, \$1,419 for the OMS Washington, D.C. trip; and Brian and Heidi Zimmerman, \$500 for Warrior Wishmakers.

The nex meeting will be held Nov. 10.

Trunk-or-treat and touch-a-truck event scheduled for Oct. 24

Richland County Children Services (RCCS), in collaboration with the Madison Township Fire Department, will host a trunk-or-treat and touch-a-truck family fun event on Saturday, Oct. 24, from 2-4 pm.

The event will be held in Madison Comprehensive High School's parking lot, 600 Esley Ln.,

Mansfield.

A rain date has been scheduled for Oct. 31, from 2-4 pm.

For more information or to sign-up to decorate a trunk and pass out treats, contact RCCS Community Engagement Support Paula Caldwell at paula.caldwell@jfs.ohio.gov or 419- 774-4163.

TEXAS ROADHOUSE

STOMPIN' OUT BREAST CANCER

October 27th

This Tuesday from 3 pm to 10 pm

10% of each meal will be donated to the Pat Kracker Breast Cancer Fund.

Come help fight breast cancer in Richland County!

30th ANNIVERSARY
Since 1996 **PAT KRACKER BREAST CANCER FUND**
GET THOSE MAMMIES GRAMMED



Lifestyle Inspiration



The Benefits of a Morning Routine

By Kelley Kovacs, LMT
Comfrey Corner

For many people, mornings are the busiest part of the day. Between getting ready for school or work and rushing out the door, it can be easy to skip healthy habits. However, creating a simple morning routine can have a positive impact on both physical and mental well-being.

A good morning routine begins with waking up at a consistent time. This helps regulate the body's internal clock and can improve sleep quality.

Before reaching for your coffee, try starting the day with a glass of warm lemon water. It can be a refreshing way to rehydrate after a night's sleep and encourages you to begin the day by drinking more water.

Then enjoy a protein-rich breakfast, such as eggs or Greek yogurt topped with fresh blueberries and a handful of nuts.

This combination provides lasting energy, helps you stay full longer, and gives your body important nutrients to start the day.

Many people find that adding a few minutes of exercise, stretching, meditation, or taking a short walk in the fresh morning air helps reduce stress and improve their mood.

Others prefer reading a book, writing in a journal, or making a to-do list before starting the day. These small habits encourage a sense of control and help people feel more prepared for the challenges ahead.

A morning routine does not need to be complicated or take a lot of time. Even spending 15 to 20 minutes on positive activities can make a noticeable difference. Over time, these healthy habits become easier to maintain and can lead to increased productivity, better concentration, and improved overall health.

I've found that the way we begin our morning often sets the tone for the rest of the day. It doesn't have to be perfect—just a few quiet moments to stretch, enjoy a cup of coffee or tea, eat a nourishing breakfast, take a deep breath, think about what you're grateful for, or take a peaceful walk can make all the difference. Finding a routine that works for you is a simple way to care for both your body and your mind.



Day Trippin' With Damon: Honey Haven Farm Ashland, OH

Honey Haven Farm offers fall family activities including a corn maze, a soy bean maze, pumpkin picking, wagon rides, giant sling shots, craft barn, concessions and farm animals. Activities run Wednesday-Sunday through Oct. 31.

Madison accepts donations for Rams Care Closet

The Madison Local School Board of Education met in the Madison Middle School Auditoria for its regular meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 14. Ram Pride Awards were presented to Diane Larrick, administrative assistant at Madison Comprehensive High School and Jenn Steffey, physical education teacher at Madison Comprehensive High School.

A presentation was given by Jacob Grove, Madison Comprehensive High School Career Tech director.

Donations of hygiene items, household items, socks, school supplies and gently used clothing, valued at \$150, was provided by Brian and Shannon Demeter, to be used for the Rams Care Closet.

Socks and underwear, valued at \$350, were donated from Modern Woodmen of America, to be used for students in need.

Rams Care Closet donations also included gently used clothing from Monica Morehead, valued at \$150; hygiene items from Jennifer Branstetter, valued at \$100; gently used clothing and new hygiene items from an anonymous donor, valued at \$200; hygiene and household items from Alyse Huggens, valued at \$125; gently used clothing and household items from Jenny Jones, valued at \$100; and clothes, backpacks and hygiene items from Trinity Grace Fellowship Church, valued at \$100.

A donation of 3,500 pounds of scrap plate steel was given by Michael Byrne Manufacturing, valued at \$5,000, to be used by the Welding Technology Programs.

A donation of approximately 500 pounds of scrap plate steel was given by Adena Corporation, valued at \$2,000, to be used by the Welding Technology Programs.

Treasurer Bradd Stevens gave the September 2026 Financial Report and the board approved the appropriation modifications and Certificate of Estimated Resources for FY27, the Health Insurance premium renewal rates effective Jan. 1, 2027 and Requisition

27ALD098 for Madison Adult Career Center Pell/Loan Funds, in the amount of \$60,000.

Resignations were accepted from David Gilbert, head 7/8 wrestling coach; and Kalen Oslie, JV Baseball head coach.

Supplemental contracts for the 2026-'27 school year were awarded to Troy Schulz, Online Academy teacher, first semester; Brent Sanders, head 7/8 track coach; Megan Moysi, assistant 7/8 track coach; Julia Litt, assistant varsity softball coach; Jeff Burkholder, assistant varsity track coach; and Kim Boehm, assistant varsity track coach.

Pupil activity positions were awarded to Jeremiah Cline, head 7th grade boys' basketball coach; Trevor Kirsch, head 7th grade girls' basketball coach; Gracie Shoup, assistant varsity swim/dive coach; Tyler Amos, assistant 7/8 track coach; Jayson Stone, head varsity baseball coach; Alec Keen, assistant varsity baseball coach; and Mico Castelvetere, assistant varsity softball (JV) coach.

Middle school detention monitors are Lisa Restelli, Kevin Andress, Kyle Bishop and Monique Eberst.

Linda Wagner will teach Time is On Your Side, Reawaken Your Childhood Dreams for Madison Adult Career Center.

Substitute teachers hired on an "on call" basis, as needed for the 2026-'27 school year were Holly Beidelschies, Jennifer Edleblute, Hannah Gombosch, Christopher Grove, Chloe Hill, Jane Jako, Drena Kilgore, Thomas Nesbitt, Juli Parsons, Michele Perry, John Smith, Maggie Thomas and Gage Weaver.

Volunteers approved include Marc Harris, varsity baseball; Rob Siwek, varsity baseball; Kalen Oslie, varsity baseball; Zach Glasgo, JV baseball; Curtis French, JV baseball; and Liam Stone, JV baseball.

Resignations were accepted from Beth Behrendsen, MECLC assistant teacher/on-call; Katelyn Carter, MECLC assistant teacher; Partena Tesca, bus driver; Dave Brown,

custodian at Madison Primary and Rebecca Richards, bus driver - Route 19

Hirings included Taylor Salser, 4-hour cafeteria, Madison Intermediate; Chelsey Norris, bus aide, preschool; Tina Clark, custodian, Madison Primary; and Natalie Lewis, MECLC assistant teacher.

Substitute employees hired on an "on call" basis, as needed, for the 2026-'27 school year include Michelle Baker, administrative assistant, library tech, special ed. paraprofessional; Dave Brown, cafeteria and custodial; Beth Conn, administrative assistant; and Hannah Owens, paraprofessional.

An overnight trip for SkillsUSA students to attend the SkillsUSA Fall Conference on Nov. 12 and 13, 2026 in Columbus, OH, was approved.

Membership in the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools (CORAS) for the 2026-'27 school year was approved. The board authorized the superintendent and treasurer to take all necessary actions associated with said membership. The board authorized Mid-Ohio ESC to subsidize fifty percent of the annual CORAS membership fee with the district's remaining membership cost and the MOESC subsidy reflected through the district's contract true-up process. CORAS membership provides professional dues/membership support for legislative advocacy, including legislative and public policy research and development designed to improve educational and learning opportunities for students, teachers and rural and small-town schools.

A resolution was approved authorizing the board to execute an agency agreement with Northwest Worksite Marketing and further a legal services contract with Grossman & Kelly LLP and its partner firms to prosecute on a contingency basis civil legal claims against the defendants in the cases of "adolescent social media and video game addiction." Litigation is pending in federal courts against any and all responsible parties.

Madison has and is expending resources responding to harms caused and the firms will work with Madison to seek recovery for its past and future costs and harms.

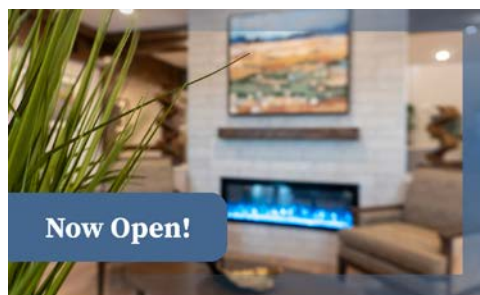
A contract between Madison Local Schools and Mansfield City Schools was approved for the reimbursement of tuition costs for home instruction services received at OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital for the 2026-'27 school year.

The board approved an hourly rate of \$22 for substitute bus drivers.

In order to offset onboarding expenses incurred by bus drivers/substitute bus drivers, the board approved \$100 stipends after the completion of 10, 20 and 45 hours of driving experience in the district.

The board approved the first reading of new/revised/replaced/rescinded board policies. The board suspended the practice of multiple readings of board policies for the October meeting and approved the first and only reading of other policies.

The next regular meeting will be held at 6 pm on Nov. 18, in the middle school auditoria.



Now Open!



SILVER BIRCH
OF MANSFIELD

Affordable Assisted Living For Seniors 55+

Silver Birch of Mansfield is proud to be the first fully Medicaid Waiver eligible Assisted Living community in Richland County!

NOW LEASING! (419) 709-8400

www.silverbirchliving.com | 300 Cline Avenue, Mansfield, OH 44907



THE OHIO CONSERVATION FARM FAMILY AWARD was presented to The McKown Family. Pictured are Adam Sharp, Ohio Farm Bureau Executive Vice President; Sam McKown, Lauren McKown, Pam McKown and Neil McKown, Watershed Ranch; Tracy Intihar, Ohio Department of Agriculture Assistant Director; Samantha Steiner, Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts President; John Wilson, NRCS Ohio State Conservationist; and Jennifer Keil, Farm Progress Senior Editor.

Shelby's McKown Family recognized for conservation

The McKown Family was recognized as one of five recipients of the Ohio Conservation Farm Family Awards presented at the 42nd Annual award ceremony on Sept. 24, 2026, during the Farm Science Review.

The program recognizes farm families for their exemplary efforts conserving soil, water, and related resources on land they farm. Conservation farm families also host a variety of educational programs, opening their farms to schools, scout groups, farm organizations and others.

The program is coordinated by the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), Division of Soil and Water Conservation and co-sponsored by the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, Ohio Farmer magazine, the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS).

Neil, Pam, and Sam McKown own and operate Watershed Ranch, a 500-acre farm in Shelby. The ranch is aptly named because it sits on the Continental Divide on a glacial moraine in the Black Fork Watershed.

The McKown's grow corn, soybeans, wheat, and hay plus have an additional 115 acres dedicated to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) forest restoration of white oak, red oak, hickory, beech, red elm, maple and natural American chestnut trees.

The farm is home to angus cows and calves and the McKown's implemented grassed waterways, nutrient management plans (NMP), grazing and drainage management, wildlife habitat improvement, livestock exclusion fencing, conservation tillage, filter strips, no-till plowing and use organic products on their farm. They annually host students of St. Mary's School, Shelby, at their farm to teach and

share their passion for conservation and the natural world.

The McKown's were awarded the Richland Soil and Water Conservation District Cooperator of the Year award in 2024, and Pam has served as a board supervisor since 2025.

Neil said, "Our mantra has always been to leave the ranch in better shape than we found it."

10th Annual Savor & Sip is Oct. 22

The Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development will celebrate the 10th Annual Savor & Sip Auction and Food Tasting on Thursday, Oct. 22, from 5 to 7:30 pm at the Mid-Ohio Conference Center, 890 W. Fourth St., in Mansfield.

Savor & Sip brings together local food establishments, businesses and community members for an evening of delicious tastings, live entertainment and exciting silent auction opportunities.

Guests can sample offerings from more than 20 food establishments while enjoying live music. The silent auction will feature more than 100 items, including themed baskets, chocolates, gift cards, sports memorabilia, getaways and other unique finds.

"We are excited to celebrate this 10th anniversary with our vendors, sponsors, donors, members and guests," said Lisa Duckworth, Programs & Events Director at the Chamber.

The event is open to chamber members and the general public. Admission is \$40 per person.

For more information or to register, visit the event page at richlandareachamber.com or call 419-522-3211.



MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY

TURN YOUR HOBBY INTO HOPE

Turn **something you love** into a fundraiser to advance Alzheimer's care, support and research.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER ➔

DO WHAT YOU LOVE TO END ALZ
ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION

SCAN TO GET STARTED



alz.org/dowhatyoulove



24/7 HELPLINE 800.272.3900

•RPS gala raises nearly \$180,000 to support families

(Continued from Front Page)

Cement Products served as the evening's premier sponsor.

Platinum sponsors included Greg and Cheryl Boyce, Fun Center Pools & Spas, Whitaker-Myers Wealth Managers, Village Catering, The Center for Cosmetic Dentistry, Modern Woodmen/Amanda and Brian Denney, and Kelly's Propane.

Gold sponsors included B-Dry Basement Waterproofing, Beer's Automotive, Dolce's Tree Service, First Class Roofing, Mansfield Linens, Tucker Creek Farm, Weekley Chrysler and Washington's Carpet One.

Silver sponsors included Bechtel Enterprises, Charles Hahn CFP, Lydy Chiropractic, Der Dutchman, Tikkun Olam Messianic Center, Heck & Stiffler, LTD, Park National Bank, and Oasis of Love.

Bronze sponsors included Bonnie Bodo, Kuhn's Bridal & Formal Outlet, Mechanics Bank and Ringler Plumbing, Heating & Cooling.

Together, these sponsors and the many individuals who contributed throughout the evening demonstrated the power of community partnerships and a shared commitment to supporting the clients and families served by Richland Pregnancy Services.

With corporate underwriting covering event expenses, the nearly \$180,000 raised during the gala can go directly toward advancing the organization's mission and providing impactful support to those it serves.

More than a successful fundraising event, the evening demonstrated the lasting impact of a community willing to invest in the lives of others. Through continued generosity, Richland Pregnancy Services can provide encouragement, practical assistance and hope to individuals and families facing some of life's most difficult circumstances.



Photos By Traci Little



Photos By Traci Little



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!

**Goldberry
Roasting Company**
1262 Franklin Ave, Ashland
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

ADVERTISE
HERE

**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

ADVERTISE
HERE

Revive Coffee Bar
1201 Mill Rd, Bellville
revivecoffeebar.com

ADVERTISE
HERE

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

**Honey B Express
Coffee Trailer**
567-303-5248

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

The Green Bean House
230 Main St, Bellville
419-719-6026
@thegreenbeanhouse



KCCC's Landscape & Ag Technology Program wins first place

MOUNT VERNON — Knox County Career Center's (KCCC) Landscape & Ag Technology program won first place at the 11th Annual 2026 Ohio Green Industry Association's (OGIA) Ohio High School Landscape Olympics (OHLO), which was held at Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute in Wooster.

Rep Marilyn John celebrates new Ohio Women's Monument

State Representative Marilyn John (R-Richland County) joined in the unveiling ceremony and celebration for the Ohio Women's Monument at the Ohio Statehouse.

The unveiling ceremony began at the Ohio Theatre and then moved to the South Plaza of the Ohio Statehouse where the monument was unveiled. The monument, which features four granite columns etched with the names of Ohio women and nine bronze figures representing women across generations, eras, and experiences, was designed by Brenda Councill.



"As only the second woman to have served in the elected offices I've held, I am proud to walk in the paths that so many women before me forged," said Rep. John. "Speaker Jo Ann Davidson specifically was a mentor to me and so many other women in public service served the state of Ohio. Like her, may we continue to break through these glass ceilings so every little girl can know she can do or be anything she dreams."

The Ohio Women's Monument is the result of more than six years of planning and collaboration among Ohio legislators and leaders, the Ohio Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission, the Capitol Square Foundation, the Capitol Square Review and Advisory Board and the Ohio Arts Council.

KCCC's Landscape Olympics is coming off a third-place finish in the OHLO in 2025 after earning back-to-back 1st-place finishes in 2021 and 2022.

OGIA's OHLO tests students' skills through hands-on, competitive events designed by industry professionals. OHLO broadens the high school educational experience and introduces students to the many opportunities available in the green industry.

KCCC's Landscape & Ag Technology students competed in 20 events against 15 other schools with 169 competitors and medaled in 12 of the 20 events. KCCC had three students who finished in the top five as OHLO Top Individuals. Weston Bostic, senior, finished in 1st place, followed by Ethan Hurlow, senior, in second place. AJ Salmons, junior, finished in fourth place.

OHLO is open to all Ohio high schools and career centers with horticulture programs. Single teams from all participating schools may compete in all events. Competitive events test the students' abilities to interact in a hands-on environment. Events are planned, implemented, and scored by industry sponsors using guidelines generated by OGIA.

"I am extremely proud of our students! They were meticulous in their approach and did a great job competing throughout the day at the Landscape Olympics," said John Campbell, KCCC's Landscape & Ag Technology instructor.

Campbell added, "I would like to thank all of the industry professionals for taking the time to judge each event and meet with students. OHLO is judged and put on entirely by businesses in the industry, and we couldn't do it without them."

Top 10 finishers from KCCC are listed below:

Chainsaw: 5th place, AJ Salmons
 Compact Excavator: 1st place, Weston Bostic
 Cost Estimating: 4th place, Landon Boyd & Bella Gullett
 Hardscape Installation: 5th place, Weston Bostic & Landon Boyd
 Herbaceous Plant ID: 1st place, Wyatt Payne
 Irrigation: 1st place, Ethan Hurlow & Trey Stuntz
 Landscape Design: 4th place, Bella Gullett
 Low Voltage Lighting: 3rd place, Landon Hoover-Knuckles
 Landscape Maintenance Operations: 2nd place, Ethan Hurlow & Jaxon Plumly
 Mini Track Loader: 2nd place, Landon Boyd
 Plant Installation: 2nd place, Nealie Oliver, Aj Salmons, And Alexia Wine
 Landscape Quality Audit: 3rd place, Aj Salmons & Nealie Oliver
 Sales Presentation: 5th place, Alexia Wine
 Skid Steer: 1st place, Weston Bostic
 Tool Id: 5th place, Madisyn Frost & Aj Salmons
 Sod Installation: 1st place, Weston Bostic & Ethan Hurlow
 Tree Climbing: 3rd place, Mason Bennett & Colton Churchheus
 Truck & Trailer: 2nd place, Ethan Hurlow & Jaxon Plumly
 Woody Plant Id: 10th place, Trey Stuntz

Empowering the Arts:

Richland Academy Invests in its Future and Downtown Mansfield

By Traci Little

For more than three decades, Richland Academy of the Arts has provided a place for creativity to flourish in the heart of downtown Mansfield. Now, through an ambitious \$3.7 million capital campaign, the organization is investing in its facilities to ensure future generations have opportunities to discover their talents, develop their skills and experience the transformative power of the arts.

Led by executive director Dr. Michael Benson, the Empower the Arts campaign seeks to modernize the Academy's aging facilities, expand educational opportunities and strengthen its longstanding commitment to downtown Mansfield.

With approximately \$2.4 million raised toward its \$3.7 million goal, the academy has made significant progress while continuing to seek community support for the remaining improvements.

The initiative represents more than a building renovation. It is an investment in arts education, community engagement and the continued revitalization of Mansfield's downtown district.

“The local arts community is a key asset for Mansfield and our entire region. We have been blessed to have strong philanthropic support for the arts for well over a century. The current campaign at the Richland Academy of the Arts continues that tradition and ensures that we will continue to cultivate the culture and talent of the next generation of students,” noted Mansfield Mayor Jodie Perry.

Building on a Legacy of Creativity

Founded in 1991 by Marianne Cooper, Richland Academy has grown into a regional center for arts education, offering instruction in music, dance, theater, visual arts and martial arts (Kenpo).

Longtime board member Joann Hipsher emphasized the importance of Mansfield's thriving arts community while highlighting the Academy's unique role in providing arts education.

"We are so fortunate Mansfield and the surrounding communities support the Arts," Hipsher said. "What sets Richland Academy apart is the Arts Education component and our extraordinary dance department!"

Hipscher pointed to organizations such as the Mansfield Symphony, Renaissance Theatre, Mansfield Art Center, Mansfield Playhouse and Kingwood Center Gardens as examples of the region's strong commitment to the arts.

Located at 75 N. Walnut St., Mansfield, the academy occupies approximately 47,000 square feet of space within historic downtown buildings, including former commercial properties and the historic Majestic Theatre.

As programming has evolved and participation has grown, the Academy's facilities have required improvements to better accommodate contemporary arts instruction and the needs of students and instructors.

The Empower the Arts campaign, launched in 2024, represents the organization's first major capital campaign in approximately 25 years.

The improvements include reorganizing instructional spaces, expanding studios, modernizing building systems and creating an en-

vironment that better supports the Academy's educational mission.

For Benson, the investment reflects the importance of creating spaces that encourage students while positioning the organization for continued growth.

"These are inspiring spaces," Benson said.

Transforming Historic Spaces for Future Generations

The architectural planning process has involved close collaboration with Benson, the Board of Trustees, the arts faculty, and the leadership team to identify needs, evaluate potential designs, and ensure improvements support both current programming and allow for long-term goals.

Helping guide the academy's physical transformation is The Seckel Group Architects, a Mansfield-based architectural firm that has worked with Richland Academy since 1998.

Principal Dan Seckel said the firm's original vision centered on adapting historic downtown storefronts for contemporary educational purposes while contributing to the city's redevelopment.

That commitment to downtown Mansfield has remained consistent even as the Academy's programming and facility needs have changed.

Over the years, spaces originally intended for future expansion were adapted to accommodate new programs. Other areas, including those once used for outdated technology or community schools, have become available for different purposes.

"As times and programs have changed some of the building areas are not well organized to group the programs currently offered," Seckel explained. "The current renovations are designed to bring a logical order."

Early improvements included the installation of a state-of-the-art dance floor and the completion of a new tap studio. The next phase will consolidate the Academy's dance programming on the second floor, creating a more cohesive instructional environment.

According to Seckel, the current improvements will also address space needs for visual arts and martial arts programming, while enhancements to music and theater facilities remain part of the broader vision.

Renovating historic buildings presents unique challenges, particularly when adapting existing structures to accommodate modern educational requirements.

(Continued on Page 15)



•Empowering the Arts:

*Richland Academy Invests in its Future and Downtown Mansfield**(Continued from Page 14)*

"Existing buildings have frameworks of size, structure, systems etc. which become determinants," Seckel said. "Melding programmatic needs with set in place features often requires creative approaches."

Seckel said the relationship between the academy and his firm has been particularly special because of the organization's continued evolution.

"Times change, needs change and Richland Academy continues to prosper and contribute to our community."

Investing in Arts Education and Community Growth

Community leaders have rallied behind the campaign, recognizing the Academy's role in expanding arts education and strengthening cultural opportunities throughout the region.

State Senator Mark Romanchuk emphasized the lasting importance of providing creative opportunities for individuals of all ages.

"Arts education plays an important role in enriching our Richland County community, providing opportunities for people of all ages to explore their creativity through music, dance, theatre, visual arts and more," Romanchuk said.

"The 'Empower the Arts' capital campaign represents an important investment in the Academy's future, helping to modernize its facilities and ensure these opportunities continue to inspire generations to come," he said.

State Representative Marilyn John echoed those sentiments, pointing to Richland County's longstanding appreciation for the performing and visual arts.

"Historically, the arts have been an important part of the fabric of Richland County," John said.

She noted that organizations such as the Mansfield Playhouse, Renaissance Theatre and Mansfield Art Center, along with the former Black Fork Players in Shelby, have provided opportunities for community members to share their talents.

"Education is an important part of this history and Richland Academy of the Arts is at the center. I'm proud to support the arts culture in our community!"

For Richland County Commissioner Tony Vero, the campaign reflects a broader investment in the community's future.

"Strong communities don't happen by accident. They're built through investments in people, education, opportunity, and quality of life," Vero said.

"Richland Academy of the Arts embodies all of those things. The 'Empower the Arts' campaign is an investment in the next generation of artists, performers, and creative thinkers, but more importantly, it's an investment in the future of Richland County."

The Lasting Impact of the Arts

Beyond the physical transformation of the academy's facilities, supporters emphasize the lasting influence arts education can have on personal development, confidence and skills that extend far beyond the classroom or stage.

Richland County Commissioner Cliff Mears draws on nearly three decades of service on the Mansfield Playhouse Board of Trustees, along with his experiences raising two children who were extensively involved in the arts.

Mears said participation in music, theater, dance and visual arts contributes not only to a community's quality of life but also to the personal growth of those involved.

He pointed to the confidence, adaptability and quick thinking required of young performers who must navigate the challenges of appearing before an audience.

Those experiences, he explained, can develop skills that remain valuable throughout adulthood.

Mears has witnessed that impact within his own family. His daughter pursued music professionally and became a music therapist and piano teacher, while his son has applied his theatrical training to his work presenting cases before courtroom juries.

"The arts have enriched my family beyond measure and in the process, have hopefully given audiences something to enjoy," Mears said.

His perspective reflects a central purpose behind the academy's mission: providing opportunities for individuals to develop their creative abilities while building confidence and skills that can influence other areas of their lives.

Strengthening Downtown Mansfield

Richland Academy continues to invest in its downtown location, reinforcing its longstanding commitment to Mansfield's revitalization.

From its early architectural development, the Academy was envisioned as part of a broader effort to bring new activity and purpose to the city's historic buildings.

Rather than moving away from its roots, the organization is adapting those spaces to meet the needs of future generations.

Seckel believes the improvements will continue to provide opportunities for creative talents to develop within the city's urban core.

He hopes the completed renovations will offer "spaces that allow individuals to develop talents they possess for greater self-worth."

That vision extends beyond the walls of the Academy, connecting arts education with the cultural vitality and continued development of downtown Mansfield.

Looking Toward the Future

As the Empower the Arts campaign continues, approximately \$1.3 million remains to be raised toward the academy's overall fundraising goal.

The completion of the new tap studio, modernization of the ADA-compliant elevator and renovation of a more secure entrance vestibule represent significant milestones in the Academy's ongoing transformation. Together, these improvements reflect the progress already made while laying the groundwork for expanded instructional opportunities and future facility enhancements.

Hipsher also expressed confidence in the academy's ability to complete its ambitious campaign, despite the remaining fundraising needs.

"We have not reached our financial goal, but we continue to prioritize next steps," she said. "I have no doubt with the leadership of the executive director, continued guidance from a strong board of trustees and our dedicated staff, we will reach our goal."

She also expressed appreciation for the donors who have helped make the improvements possible and encouraged community members to experience the Academy's transformation firsthand.

For Seckel, who has witnessed nearly three decades of the academy's growth and transformation, the importance of the project extends beyond the physical changes.

"Creativity drives a community," he said. "Richland Academy allowing and assisting all ages to develop skills develops an enhanced environment for all of us."

Hipsher expressed appreciation for the donors who have supported the campaign while emphasizing the importance of continued community involvement.

"I'd like to thank everyone that has contributed to the campaign. We still need your help. We are proud of how far we have come," she said.

She also encouraged residents to visit the academy and experience the creativity taking place within its historic downtown walls.

"Next time you are downtown, stop in and see us," Hipsher said. "Tour the facility and witness creativity coming to life!!"

With the continued support of donors, community partners and local leaders, the Academy hopes to build upon its longstanding legacy while creating opportunities for generations of students still to come.

As Benson emphasized, achieving that vision will require a shared commitment from the community.

"We can only achieve this goal by working together!"

**View & Print
Past Issues**

at www.tribune-courier.com

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights



Photo By Jenna Wolford

CRESTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL BOYS cross country team members are Logan Robinson, Cody Wolford, Brant Leidigh, Titus Kelley, Jackson VanScyoc, Easton Smith, Isaac McFarland and Isaac Smith. Not pictured is Chandler Gregory.

Cougars are conference champions

The Crestview High School boys cross country team earned top honors at the Firelands Conference race on Saturday, Oct. 17 in Norwalk.

Taking home the title of Firelands Conference Champions, the Cougars were led by junior Isaac McFarland, taking second with a time of 17:09. Following McFarland were sophomore Isaac Smith in third with 17:17; freshman Easton Smith, fifth, 17:23; junior Logan Robinson, seventh, 18:14; junior Jackson VanScyoc, 16th, 18:58; freshman Cody Wolford, 26th, 20:00; freshman Chandler Gregory, 47th, 22:00; and junior Titus Kelley 59th, 27:11.

This is the second consecutive conference win for the boys.

The girls team placed third with junior Laynie Kemp leading the team with a second place finish with a time of 21:30. Following were junior Gracie Galloway, 12th, 23:08; freshman Elianna Kelley, 21st, 27:11; junior Emily Pond, 30th, 27:57; and Alex Cutlip, 31st, 28:02.

Both teams will compete in the Division IV District race in Galion at Amman's Reservoir this Saturday. The girls run at 10 am, followed by the boys at 10:45 am.

The top seven teams will advance to regionals in Tiffin the following weekend. There will be 17 boys teams competing at Galion and 19 girls teams.



Photo By Jenna Wolford

CRESTVIEW HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS cross country team members are Elianna Kelley, Laynie Kemp, Alex Cutlip, Emily Pond and Gracie Galloway.

Fortress Obetz will host OHSAA Cross Country Championships

The City of Obetz will welcome student-athletes, coaches, families and fans from across Ohio to Fortress Obetz this fall for two Ohio High School Athletic Association cross country championship events.

On Sunday, Oct. 25, Fortress Obetz will host the OHSAA 7th and 8th Grade State Cross Country Championship, which is the only OHSAA-sponsored postseason cross country event for seventh and eighth grade athletes.

Then on Saturday, Nov. 7, the OHSAA high school state championships will take center stage, when state champions will be crowned in four divisions for both girls and boys at the 98th annual boys and 49th annual girls state finals.

"We are honored to welcome these talented student-athletes and their supporters to Obetz," said Mayor Angela Kirk. "These events allow us to create a memorable experience for competitors while

showcasing our community and all that Fortress Obetz has to offer to visitors from across Ohio."

Fortress Obetz staff takes great pride in preparing the facility and course for each event, with the goal of ensuring every athlete, coach, and spectator leaves with a positive experience and lasting memories.

"We are excited to return to Fortress Obetz for our championships this fall," said BJ Duckworth, the OHSAA's cross country sport administrator.

"The Fortress team does a fantastic job supporting our tournament manager, Dugan Hill, in giving our student athletes the best experience possible. The course is challenging, forcing the athletes to race strategically, and with both mile split points in the stadium as well as views of the entire course from the top of the stands, making it a great place for cross country."

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS MADISON VARSITY FOOTBALL · OCT. 16
MADISON WINS 20-14 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

Mansfield Christian Coach Jesse Rider reaches 100 wins

By Kris Leiter

The number 100 can have significant meanings depending on the context. In the coaching world, it is quite a landmark notching 100 wins!

Mansfield Christian girls soccer coach Jesse Rider was recently celebrated for his 100th win — a milestone that definitely doesn't happen overnight.

Rider has a long history with the Flames, graduating in 2002 and previously coaching the Mansfield Christian Boys team in 2013, 2016 and 2017.

His road to 100 wins goes back a few moons ago through a compilation of different schools.

"I started in Ontario around 2008. I coached a couple seasons with the boys and the girls during my two years."

He was then the assistant coach at Mansfield Christian from 2004-'08 and 2014-'15. They won the state championship in 2014 and he coached the boys team in 2013 to state runners-up.

Currently in his third year, with the girls soccer team, things are going in a good direction this year.

The Flames are holding their own quite well at 8-7-2, 2-0-1 MBC (first place). The Mid-Buckeye Conference consists of Crestline, Mansfield St. Peters and Central Christian (Kidron, OH).

This includes a huge shutout of 8-0 over Mansfield Senior and a dominating win of 9-1 over the Loudonville Redbirds.

They also made a huge mark in school history by locking up with a 1-1 tie with powerhouse Akron Archbishop Hoban. It was the first time tangling with the Knights. A win on the road made the victory that much sweeter.

The Flames held their own as freshman Bella Rider notched the Flames single but mighty goal in the 1-1 tie. Not bad against a Division III Final Four team.

The Flames roster this year is strong, as 12 of 19 roster players are juniors and seniors. It surely brings a wealth of experience.

Rider says this year, their schedule expands to teams outside of Richland County. He thrives on the new opponents.

"I feel it makes us stronger by playing teams we haven't seen before."



Photos By Jeff Hoffer

Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS MANSFIELD CHRISTIAN GIRLS VARSITY SOCCER • OCT. 15
2-2 TIE • PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

Lucas cross country makes big changes with move to N10

By Kris Leiter

The small but mighty Lucas Cubs cross country team, Division IV, have had some big changes this fall.

The first major change is being a new member of the Northern 10 conference, Eastern Division.

In March 2025, the Lucas School Board accepted an invitation to join the conference. Lucas was previously a member of the Mid-Buckeye Conference from 2013-'25. It also included Central Christian (Kidron, OH), Mansfield Christian and Mansfield St. Peters.

"It's an exciting year because we're into our first year of the N10," said assistant coach Mike Bichsel. "There are a lot of new teams and also some we have seen before such as Clear Fork."

The N10 was formed in 2012 with nine teams and didn't start play until the 2014-'15 school year. Buckeye Central, Bucyrus, Carey, Colonel Crawford, Crestline, Mohawk, Ridgedale, Riverdale and Wynford were founding members.

Riverdale was originally included, but they decided to move to the Blanchard Valley Conference. Upper Sandusky filled that vacancy.

Crestline left after 2014-'15 and Ridgedale dropped out to become independent in football.

In early 2025, other schools joined including Lucas. Hopewell-Loudon, New Riegel, Old Fort, Tiffin Calvert and Willard. There are now 14 schools and two divisions: East and West.

The West division includes Tiffin Calvert Senecas, Carey Blue Devils, Hopewell-Loudon Chieftains, Mohawk Warriors, New Riegel Blue Jackets, Old Fort Stockaders and Upper Sandusky Rams.

The East division consists of Buckeye Central Bucks, Bucyrus Redmen, Colonel Crawford Eagles, Lucas Cubs, Seneca East Tigers, Willard Crimson Flashes and the Wynford Royals.

Another substantial change has been in the coaching ranks. Bichsel, with Lucas since 2022, is sharing the workload with coach Spencer Adams who recently became a parent.

The co-coaching arrangement allows Adams additional time to spend with family.

Bichsel, an alumni of New Philadelphia High School ran cross country for the Quakers. He has brought a wealth of experience to the table.

"I came on board helping Adam's with mile-splits and encouragement. He took me in and has been amazing. He is such a great leader and gives other coaches a chance to learn. He is my mentor and very dedicated to the kids."

Bichsel has two sons that ran for Lucas. Patrick, a 2021 graduate, and Gavin, four years younger.

Patrick coached the middle school team for two years beginning in 2024, but his day job took precedence. Gavin, in his second year at Heidelberg, runs cross country and track.

"We have 11 runners between middle and high school," said Bichsel. "Middle school runs two miles and high school, runs a 5K (3.1 miles)."

"High school has three boys and three girls with two dynamite freshmen, Jasmine Ramey and Peyton Crooks. They ran well in middle school also."

The teams now head into post season with the district race at Galion this weekend. If runners qualify, they will move to regionals the next Saturday.

"The regional race is very competitive and big. It's at Tiffin's Hedges-Boyer Park and if we do well there, that leads to state."

The Ohio High School Athletic Association State Championships will be held at the Fortress Obetz near Columbus on Saturday, Nov. 7. This will be a competition for all four divisions.

Even though the high school teams do not field a full team of five, runners can qualify as individuals to advance through post season.

"Running is an amazing sport and is great conditioning for life. It's one of those sports that you can do all your life."



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 October 7, 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. 26-19 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR HIS DESIGNEE TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT AND / OR LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM(S) AND TO EXECUTE CONTRACTS AS REQUIRED, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-20 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY

TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO PERFORM OVERHEAD SIGN SUPPORT IMPROVEMENTS AT VARIOUS LOCATIONS ON SR 309 IN THE CITY OF ONTARIO, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

Abbey Beaver
Clerk of Council
Ontario, Ohio

(T-C 10-15, 22 '26) 36L

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of voluntary dissolution of Richland Engineering Limited, an Ohio limited partnership association. To all creditors and claimants of Richland Engineering Limited.

Notice is hereby given that Richland Engineering Limited, an Ohio Limited partnership association, whose principal office is located at Richland County, Ohio, has filed a Certificate of Dissolution and is winding up its business.

Jerod M. Them,
Attorney, Weldon, Huston & Keyser, L.L.P.
Mansfield, Ohio

(T-C 10-22, 29, 11-5, 12, 19, 26 '26) 16L



ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL'S FCCLA recently sponsored a Red Cross Blood Drive. Students and staff came to give during the drive.

Or Fill Out the Form at: <http://eepurl.com/hnS9N9>

Scan to Subscribe FREE

Letter to the Editor

(Continued from Page 2)

Two issues are on the ballot.

The first is a renewal of the property tax that expires at the end of 2026. Passage will not increase property taxes. It will continue to collect the same amount that was approved in 2011. The term of the renewal is for five years. No matter the value of your home, this issue will not increase your property taxes.

The second is an earned income tax of 0.75% with a term of 10 years. This will only be collected on wages earned. All retirement income, pensions, social security, etc. are not taxable. An earned income tax will not impact the retirement income of our retired residents on fixed incomes. This earned income tax would represent the first new operating levy for our district since 2011.

I have one additional request for our residents — let's remember the pride we all have in our schools and community.

I believe in our schools. I'm proud of our schools, our staff, and our students. Lexington schools are the reason many people choose to live here. We provide educational leadership and continue to serve the needs of every resident. Certainly, we serve our students and their families. The schools serve our employees as they provide for the needs of every student. And our continued excellence helps maintain property values for us all.

If you have additional questions about the schools and the ballot issues, please reach out to me.

Join me in proudly supporting our schools by voting yes, twice, on Nov. 3. Together we can continue the traditions of leadership that Lexington Schools exemplify. Together we can have a school district we can all be proud of. Together, we are Lexington!

In your service,

Keith Stoner, President, Lexington Board of Education

Whaley will speak at annual fall dinner

The Richland County Democratic Party has scheduled its annual fall dinner for Thursday, Oct. 22nd at the IBEW Local #688 Union Hall, 67 S. Walnut St., Mansfield. Social Hour will commence at 5 pm and dinner will be served at 6 pm.

The cost of this dinner is \$35 for a reserved seat, \$300 for a reserved table of 8. Payment will be accepted at the door.

The guest speaker will be Nan Whaley, former Mayor of Dayton and former candidate for governor.

Whaley is an experienced public servant who has spent her career addressing inequities and protecting reproductive rights and health choices for the people of Ohio.

Contact vice chair Venita Shoulders at 419-564-0486 or venitashoulders@gmail.com for reservations or more information.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

First Federal
Bank of Ohio

THE RIGHT LOAN. THE RIGHT BANK.

LISA ANDERSON

Branch Manager/Loan Officer, NMLS 618735
landerson@firstfederalbankofohio.bank

1728 W. Fourth Street
Mansfield, Ohio 44906

Phone: 419-529-4687
Fax: 419-529-4154

