



# TRIBUNE-COURIER

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

news@tribune-courier.com

12.14.23



Photo by Traci Little

**RICHLAND ACADEMY OF THE ARTS** presented *The Nutcracker Ballet* on Saturday, Dec. 9 and Sunday, Dec. 10, at the Renaissance Theatre. This was the academy's sixth annual production of the ballet. The Nutcracker tells the story of a little girl named Clara who is given a magical nutcracker doll on Christmas Eve. She encounters the frightful Rat King before embarking on a magical journey through the Land of Snow and the Kingdom of Sweets where she meets the Sugar Plum fairy and is entertained with many different kinds of dances. *(More photos on Page 9)*

## Donors can give a gift, get a gift

As people make travel plans to celebrate with family and friends this year, the American Red Cross asks donors to set aside time to give blood or platelets for patients waiting for care over the holidays.

From a record number of people expected to travel to seasonal illnesses and the potential for hazardous winter weather, it can be difficult for the Red Cross to collect enough blood for patients during the winter months. When donors come to give the gift of a blood or platelet donation in December, the Red Cross will say thank you with several opportunities:

Thanks to Prime Video and their new film *Candy Cane Lane*, featuring an all-star cast, including Eddie Murphy and Tracee Ellis Ross, and directed by Reginald Hudlin, those who come to give blood, platelets or AB Elite plasma Dec. 1–31, will automatically be entered for a chance to win a \$1,000 Amazon.com gift card and a 65-inch Omni QLED Series Amazon Fire TV.

Those who come to give blood, platelets or AB Elite plasma Dec. 1–17 will receive a \$10 Amazon.com gift card by email.

Those who come to give blood, platelets or AB Elite plasma Dec. 18 through Jan. 5, will receive an exclusive Red Cross long-sleeved t-shirt, while supplies last.

Making and keeping appointments throughout the month can help safeguard the national blood supply into the new year. Schedule an appointment by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting

*(Continued on Page 10)*

## New murals by local artists on display in downtown Mansfield

New public artworks in downtown Mansfield are just the story's beginning. Located across from the main library and the Chamber of Commerce, three murals by local artists illustrate how "Books Move Your Imagination."

"Once Upon a Library" by artist Allison Pence, transforms the large bus garage doors into two big bookcases full of classic literature, unmarked books, a scattering of encyclopedias, a globe, and an onward gazing mouse named Booker. Pence paints a vibrant fantasy scene, with a beanstalk, a castle, a dragon, and a ship sailing into a colorful horizon as a hot air balloon rises.

"Right at the Tip of the Mind" by artist Demetrius Howell, shows a feeling of wonderment that an open book can give a child. Howell painted his son Zion with an open book on his lap, and it's his largest portrait and mural to date. Images pop up from the book and into a vast universe of ideas that bubble in front of Zion, a mixture of spray paint and hand-painted styles swirl together.

"Wild About Books" by Robin Shoup, creates a scene of majestic nature that springs forth in an open book. The viewer is transported to a safari adventure, making eye contact with wild animals staring back at you with life-like intrigue, a pride of lions, a cheetah perched in a tree, a pair of giraffes, koalas, and elephants, as a baby chimpanzee hangs out and outwardly smiles.

Local artists created The murals this year in collaboration with Mankind Murals Inc, RCDG Mansfield Arts & Culture Sector, and the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library (MRCPL).

"The MRCPL Board and staff are pleased to highlight three of our talented local artists through the garage mural project. These murals make Mansfield more unique, cultivate cultural awareness, and inspire community engagement and a feeling of belonging," says Chris May, Library Director.

Lending their individual talents and creative ideas to the main library and the Imagination District as a whole, the murals by Allison Pence and Robin Shoup are 18ft tall by 22ft long, and Demetrius Howell's design spans 18ft tall by 30ft long. The murals were started

*(Continued on Page 10)*



"Once Upon a Library" by artist Allison Pence

# Lizzie Marsh, Good Christian Mother

By Bob Carter

Lizzie Mae Dawkins was born in poverty in Holly Springs, Mississippi in March of 1920. Her childhood was spent boiling sheets and clothes for white people in pots on their lawn and cooking for her stepmothers younger four children, never getting to have the fried bologna sandwiches and peppermint candy they had.

She and others walked two miles bare foot to an all black one-room school with a black teacher.

There was free lunch for skinny kids, but Lizzie weighed too much so she got nothing. She'd eat pecans that had fallen from the trees on her way to school. With no lunch, she would ask her teacher for paper and practice writing and arithmetic.

"I wanted an education so bad," she said. "I see a lot of blacks that can't read."

The school had very few books to read. She was smart and helped the younger kids.

Lizzie had to quit school in the sixth grade and in the 1930s worked for a white family that didn't have a washing machine so she was forced to boil sheets over a fire in the yard and scrub. She was a maid six days a week for a clerk at a dry goods store. The woman decided she didn't want her old cast iron stove and sold it to Lizzie, docking her \$6 a week pay until it was paid for. It was their first stove and it had a reservoir for heating water.

Lizzie's stepmother had five younger children and if one wanted a drink of water, Lizzie was told to go get it. She did most of the housework and was treated like a servant. They slept three to a bed, two outside at the head, the one in the middle to the foot. When the older ones started to leave, Lizzie got a cot for her own and used burlap sacks for sheets.

Lizzie married when she was seventeen, partly to get away from her stepmother, and became the bride of William Marsh Sr., and had



**LIZZIE MAE MARSH** knew she wanted something better. She was one of 6.5 million blacks that left the South.

nine children by the time she was 30. All were born at home. "We didn't have money to go to the hospital."

A son had moved to Mansfield and worked in the kitchen at the Leland Hotel. Her husband came also in 1950 and found a job with Mansfield Asphalt Paving. Her brother sent money so the family moved to Mansfield in a big open truck of a friend and was amazed at Mansfield. There were lights everywhere and people had cars, something not seen much in Holly Springs.


Their new home was on Crystal Springs Street, near Bowman, just across from the steel mill. Lizzie was amazed! They had running water, heat, electricity and a refrigerator, things they had never experienced in Holly Springs.

There was one serious problem however. They had no winter clothes, but a neighbor got all the maids that worked for white people and collected all the hand-me-down or out-grown clothes and boots so the kids could go to school. Lizzie had to stay in that first winter as she had no coat. Weather permitting, she always sat in the back of the Baptist church as she only had one dress and no purse. It was a while before she had a coat and boots.

All of her children graduated from high school except one. One son went to college and he had a daughter that went to Harvard and became a corporate lawyer in Atlanta, GA. Lizzie once remarked, "I thanked the Lord for wanting to come up here."

The year after arriving, Lizzie went to work for Independent Towel on Bowman Street. One of her older sons would watch the younger family. No doubt a minimum wage job, she said it was very, very hot in summer as the towels came out of a hot washer and had to be

(Continued on Page 3)



## THE ENTERTAINMENT EXAMINER

— By Ian Stumbo —

I would not have believed it if you would have told me at the beginning of 2023 that a potential best film of the year candidate would be a *Godzilla* movie!

The Japanese made *Godzilla Minus One* is number 30 something in terms of how many creature features the company has made since the original in the 1950s.

Set right after World War II in the 1940s, a kamikaze pilot named Koichi (Ryunosuke Kamiki) encounters *Godzilla* and several years later still has nightmares about the beast.

He befriends a woman who takes in a young child after their village has been bombed and they become a family with real goals and ambitions. Koichi takes a job with three other men retrieving bombs from the ocean and disarming them.

Soon, *Godzilla* re-surfaces headed towards Tokyo and a group of war veterans ban together to stop the monster once and for all.

What makes *Godzilla Minus One* so good is its attention to the details of place and time. It creates a real human story with the main characters and there are few and far between *Godzilla* films that make the audience feel anything other than wanting to see him smash buildings into pieces.

The *Godzilla* franchise has been going on for such a long time, in my life there has

been the 1997 film with Matthew Broderick and then Warner Brothers and their monster franchise that started in 2014 with *Godzilla* and now has added King Kong into the mix. *Godzilla Minus One* is totally separate and is a Japanese Toho film.



*Godzilla* looks great too. Very menacing and pretty scary. The scenes where he is in downtown Tokyo and the sequences in the

water are terrific. The fact that the movie takes so much time to tell the human story while giving the audience the monster film they want is really an asset to how well the filmmakers just did what they wanted to do and made everything work so well.

*Godzilla Minus One* is a terrific film in this very long running series. The fact that the filmmakers and writers can still make a movie this good is a credit to them.


Definitely see this one in the theaters if you can and whether a *Godzilla* fan or not, this is a solid action film with great acting. The only letdown was the ending was pretty cliché and obvious for this movie; however, the rest of the movie was so good it's easy to let it slide.

It is in Japanese with subtitles though I hope that does not deter anyone. It's worth a watch.



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# News Briefs

The Pioneer Career and Technology Center Board of Education will hold its regular December board of education meeting at 6 pm, Monday, Dec. 18, in the Pioneer Room Restaurant located in the west end of the building at the Pioneer Career and Technology Center, Shelby.

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Avenue West, in downtown Mansfield, will be celebrating Advent during the four Sundays in December (Dec. 3, 10, 17 and 24.) Each Sunday a designated family comes forward to share in the lighting of the Advent candles. This is integral in our preparation for the celebration of the Holy Night when Jesus is born. Sunday worship is at 10 am, Christmas Eve worship is at 7 pm with special music and 7:30 pm Worship.

Rev. Dr. Amy C Little, General Secretary of the North American Lutheran Church and daughter of our congregation will offer the children's message and the sermon on Christmas Eve. All are welcome.

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, Dec. 22 through 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.

★

The Lexington Area Senior Citizens Inc., invites those 55 and older to attend meetings the third Wednesday of every month.

The December meal will be held Wednesday, Dec. 20, at the Ontario Event Center at 11 am. Reservations are \$20 for members and \$25 for non members. Call Anita for availability at 419-565-3461. Jane Horton, country/gospel singer, will perform.

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

★

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

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church, 25 Church St., Bellville, will welcome Christopher Reynolds at 10:30 am on Dec. 17. For more information visit [www.allsoulsuohio.org](http://www.allsoulsuohio.org).

★

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

Age is a qualification, so those attending should bring a current identification card complete with date of birth and proof of income. Distribution is on the east side of the building between 11:30 am and 1:30 pm to get registered and pick up a box. There is no cost. Call 419-522-0662 for more information.

For December, due to the holiday, a special distribution will be held on the third Tuesday of December on Dec. 19. This will replace the regular fourth Tuesday distribution.

★

Olivesburg General Store, 4778 OH-545, Ashland, will host its third annual "Very Merry Burg Bake-off!" People of all ages are invited to share a favorite Christmas cookie or candy recipe. Prizes will be awarded for best in each age bracket, most creative and overall winner. The event will be held Saturday, Dec. 16. Cookie drop off will start at 11 am and judging will start at 12:15 pm. Prizes will be Olivesburg General Store gift certificates. Sign-up by visiting <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4FABAD23A6FBC52-46153212-avery-merry?fbclid=IwAR3i04lqRRiLXAZPsLfhSVW1SbzI1RRJnbviYD-9JXvoVpyAWv1tsEihVED0#/>

## •Lizzie Marsh, Good Christian Mother

(Continued from Page 2)

placed on a huge hot drying roller, ironed and then folded.

"We had a couple of fans, but they didn't help much," she said. She worked there for 30 years, eventually renting a house just across the street.

"I promised the Lord, if you give me my health and strength to work, Lord, I'll keep these children in church. I didn't tell the Lord no story. That's how come God's so good to me."

Lizzie kept her part of the bargain. She once remarked, "I always knew I wanted to get somewhere but I had too many children. I never did get nowhere. At least I could help the children. At least they didn't go hungry. We were poor, but proud. I was very proud."

I met Lizzie while on an after retirement part-time job delivering food to the elderly, disabled and handicapped. Lizzie was usually at her kitchen table with her well worn Bible in the center. Often visitors or family were there with her laughing or expressing happiness in conversations. She was a very happy person and never mentioned the hardships she endured. She loved to laugh! She had many friends, but no drinking friends. She said, "I saw what happened to them in Holly Springs."

Loretta Hilliard wrote a book *A History of Notable African-Americans In Richland County, Ohio*. Material from that book was used in this story. Among all the black ministers, teachers, lawyers, businessmen, sports people and community leaders in the book, there was only one simple house wife and Christian mother. Lizzie Marsh.

Lizzie's husband Willie died in 1975, leaving her alone. But she was never alone at night as taking turns, one of her children or grandchildren or family member would come and stay the night with her.

She was never alone. Unable to climb stairs, her bed was in the living room, just inside the door.

She died at Winchester Terrace Nursing Home in March of 2013 at age 92. The funeral was held at the Mt. Herman Baptist Church. A very large crowd of mourners were present including the mayor, police chief, prominent blacks, family, friends and even white people. Lizzie was the kind of Christian person that once you met her, you'd never forget her. I never will.



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Photos By Traci Little

**SORELLÉ'S HARMONY HOLIDAY BASH** was held Saturday, Dec. 9, at the recently renovated and reopened Ashland Theater, 212 Center St., Ashland, from 7–9 pm. The night included an intimate interactive concert filled with singing, dancing and stories. Sorellé teamed up with Red Helmet Christmas Charities and collected new, unwrapped toys in exchange for a VIP bracelet to attend a meet and greet and photoshoot with Sorellé after the show. Sorellé, consisting of sisters Madi, Ana and Bella Heichel of Lexington, was featured on NBC's *The Voice* earlier this year and became season 23 finalists. For information on Sorelle visit [linktr.ee/SorelleMusic](http://linktr.ee/SorelleMusic).

# Church Directory

**Clear Fork Alliance Church**

1008 State Route 97, Bellville  
 419-886-4333 • [www.clearforkalliance.org](http://www.clearforkalliance.org)  
 Rev. Matt Merendino  
 Rev. Mike Stine, Associate Pastor  
 9 am Sunday School • 10 am Sunday Worship  
 Sunday Evening 6 pm Home Groups  
 Monday Men's Group 7:30 pm  
 Wednesday evenings: 6:45 pm Prayer Meeting  
 6:30–8 pm TeamKID and Youth Group  
 Wednesday Ladies Bible Study 6:30–8 pm

**Community Bible Church**

1043 Springmill St., Mansfield  
 567-560-8011  
[www.DiscoverCommunity.org](http://www.DiscoverCommunity.org)  
 Pastor Sam Belsterling  
 10:30 am Sunday Worship  
 Live stream at <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityBibleChurchMansfield>

**First English Lutheran Church**

53 Park Avenue West, Mansfield  
 419-522-0662 • [www.felc-mansfield.org](http://www.felc-mansfield.org)  
 Interim Pastor Lisa Peterson  
 9 am Sunday School • 10 am Sunday Worship  
 Call about Prayer Groups, Small Groups, Bible Studies, Book Clubs, Pub Theology, Community Meals, Free Produce distribution and Senior Boxes.

**Wappner Funeral Home**

Mansfield • Ontario • Ashland • 419-522-5211

**Lexington Presbyterian Church**

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

**Mansfield 1st EPC**

399 Trimble Rd., Mansfield  
 419-756-7066 • [www.mansfield1st.com](http://www.mansfield1st.com)  
 Rev. Joseph Yerger  
 9 am Adult & Youth Sunday School  
 10 am Sunday Worship

**Oakland Lutheran Church**

2045 Olivesburg Rd.  
 419-571-9920  
 Pastor Paul Lintern  
 9 am Sunday Worship

**Ontario Christian Church**

1029 Lewis Rd., Ontario  
 419-529-5684 • [ontariochristian.org](http://ontariochristian.org)  
 Minister Steve Broughton  
 9 am Sunday School  
 10 am Sunday Worship

**Ontario United Methodist Church**

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

**Southside Christian Church  
 Disciples of Christ**

2055 Middle-Bellville, Mansfield  
 Streamed on Paul Lintern Facebook Page  
 Sunday 10:45 am  
 "A Refuge for Hymn-singers!"

**St. Mary of the Snows Catholic Church**

1630 Ashland Rd., Mansfield (Madison) 419-589-2114 • [www.mansfieldstmarys.org](http://www.mansfieldstmarys.org)  
 Father John Miller  
 Worship: 4 pm Saturday & 11 am Sunday  
 5:30 pm Tuesday Worship  
 8 am Friday Worship • Faith Instruction & Bible Study on Sunday Mornings

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

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

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# Beth Hoeffgen receives HNCO Volunteer of the Year Award

Hospice of North Central Ohio (HNCO) presented the 8th Annual Sandra J. Rule Dauch Volunteer of the Year Award to Beth Hoeffgen.



Danielle England, HNCO Volunteer coordinator stated, "Beth has been involved with our organization for over eight years. She has dedicated this time to serving with a true spirit of volunteerism by going above and beyond in every task or project. Volunteering countless hours during this time, the impact made to our mission is indelible."

Established in 2016 through a grant from The Richard E. & Sandra J. Dauch Foundation, Charlevoix, Michigan, the award is presented annually in honor of National Hospice & Palliative Care Month to a HNCO volunteer who exhibits extraordinary commitment, impact, personal growth, and inspiration to others. Nominations are submitted by su-

perisors and peers and reviewed by a selection committee.

HNCO regularly engages approximately 200 volunteers who provide and/or assist with patient care programs, administrative duties, special events, military pinning ceremonies, Camp Hope children's bereavement camp and What Goes 'Round Thrift shoppe operations.

Ralph Tomassi, HNCO Chief Development Officer/Senior Administrator added, "We are grateful for this special endowment tuna grant which has allowed us bring recognition to those who do so much for so little in support of our special mission."

Hospice of North Central Ohio has served thousands of families with end-of-life and Palliative care, bereavement programs and services since 1988. Headquartered at 1021 Dauch Dr., in Ashland, Hospice of North Central Ohio serves more than 200 patients daily in Ashland, Crawford, Huron, Knox, Morrow and Richland counties who are living with chronic and terminal illnesses.

Additionally, free continuous bereavement services are provided for hundreds of families of hospice patients and to anyone in the community experiencing grief. HNCO also operates the What Goes 'Round Thrift Shoppe located in downtown Mansfield.

Call 800-952-2207 for more information.



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[mrcpl.org](http://mrcpl.org)



Scan for more details.

### Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

- Rosa Lee Paulson, December 1
- Marilyn Magdalene Stimens, December 1
- Nathan Allen Atwater, December 2
- Diana Jane Harter, December 2
- Maxine Conley, December 3
- Barbara Ann Cross, December 3
- Tommy Vernon Hunt, December 6
- Christine Kay Rader, December 7
- Emma Frances Franklin, December 8
- Ronald Eugene Nacke, December 8

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

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- Ashland • 308 Claremont Avenue • 419-289-1552

[www.wappner.com](http://www.wappner.com)



**ONTARIO WARRIOR LEADERSHIP COUNCIL** members spent the morning at Crossroads Community Church preparing for the distribution of Christmas gifts to over 1000+ of our community's children. Members organized and packaged the gifts, as well as put together a room of gently-used decorations and a room of homemade cookies.



### **Donations being accepted for Humane Society**

Donations are being accepted for the Humane Society of Richland County. Items needed include canned cat, kitten and dog food, squeaky toys, treats, Purina kitten chow, cans of pumpkin and items on the Amazon wish list at <https://a.co/8jxPc4y>.

Donations should be dropped off no later than Dec. 22 at the Ontario Post Office, 3656 Park Ave. West, Ontario.



Photo by Damon Callis

**Day Trippin' With Damon** – Honey Run Falls Howard, Ohio, is part of the Knox County Park District and includes a 25-foot high waterfall. A parking lot to access the falls is located at 10855 Hazel Dell Road , Howard.



*Home of  
Robin Broadus  
of Worthington*

**Christmas**  
SPACES



*kimmyscucina*  
By Kim Sterry

**POTATO AND LEEK SOUP WITH BACON**

**Ingredients**

- 8 Tbsp. butter
- 2 cups chopped leeks
- Bacon cut in pieces
- 10 yellow potatoes, washed and cut in cubes
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 cups sour cream
- 1 cup milk (optional)
- Salt and Pepper to Taste

**Instructions**

Melt butter in small stock pot. Add leeks and saute until soft. Remove from pot and add bacon, saute until crispy and set aside. Add cubed potatoes to pan and stir around for a few minutes. Add broth and 2 bay leaves. Boil until potatoes are soft. Add leeks back in (saving some if you would like to put in whole). With immersion blender, blend potatoes and leeks. (You can blend until smooth or leave some chunks). Whisk in the sour cream, add in bacon (or wait to put in bowls when you serve..

*LIKE Kimmy's Cucina on Facebook & Instagram*



Photos By Traci Little

**THE SILENCE AND THE SOUND**, A Cantata For Christmas By Heather Sorenson, was performed by The Mansfield Community Choir during a concert held on Sunday, Dec. 10, at Madison Middle School. Pastor Jonathan Stuft welcomed those attending and Carol Wigal was accompanist. The Mansfield Community Choir is directed by Craig Green and narrated by Debbie Knee. Choir members are Bobbie Ballenger, Amber Butterbaugh, Mary Collet, Karen Feichtner, Kathy Glessner, Jen Harvey, Fran Hoepfner, Val Liston, Melissa Mickley, Sherri Montgomery, Pam Mock, Amanda Morant Sue Pelasky, Barb Radabaugh, Sharon Radabaugh, Pat Reed, Katie Serrao, Mary Steude, Lisa Turner, Pat Wheitner, Summer Adkins, Julie Anderson, Joyce Boling, Chris Calhoun, Linda Cochran, Bonnie Elias, Jean Erwin, Mandi Green, Ashley Hardy Sherry Hardy, Cathy Kiley, Rachel Langer, Kari Maglott, Margie Mosier, Bobbi Reid, Kris Stantz, Janet Steward, Sandy Sturdevant, Carol Wigal, Delaney Wilson, Denise Wilson, David Bullock, Katie Danielson, Dave Erwin, Courtney Hardy, Perry Kent, Natalie Morant, BethAnn Weidenhamer, Mike Wilson, Nathan Willis, Bob Burns, Lewis Hendrickson, Scott LaDuke, Ryan Mock, Barney Musselman and Ethan Wilson. Pictured is Katie Serrao singing "Sleeping Adonai."

## Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshops planned

With the holidays upon us, gift givers may be thinking about what to gift the favorite people in their life. Gifting experiences is always a possibility. Now is the perfect time to think about next year's Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshops hosted by Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) to share with and gift to someone. The evenings are filled with laughter, fun, learning about interesting topics related to nature and conservation, and creativity.

Richland SWCD provides the materials and tools needed to make the project. Reservations are requested and the workshops cost \$12 per person. All participants will also receive a free pair of eclipse glasses at the January and April workshops, while supplies last.

The quarterly workshop schedule is as follows:

January 9: Solar Eclipse Suncatcher at 6 pm at the Longview Center located at 1495 W. Longview Avenue, Mansfield. You will make a beautiful suncatcher and John McClintock, amateur astronomer, will share some of his eclipse experiences.

April 1: Horray for Herbs! at 6 pm at the Longview Center. Participants will plant herbs from recycled alpaca pellets in a container.

July 9: Long Live Leaves at 6 pm at the Longview Center. Participants will make a clay bowl from an impression of a leaf.

October 8: Buckeye Beauties, 6 pm at Gorman Nature Center located at 2295 Lexington Avenue, Mansfield. Participants will make an ornament from Buckeye tree nuts.

Visit <https://richlandswcd.net/events/> or call 419-747-8685 for more information and to register for the workshops.

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*Richland Academy's The Nutcracker*



Photos By Traci Little



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ALZHEIMER'S ASSOCIATION®

## •New murals by local artists on display in downtown Mansfield

(Continued from Front Page)

earlier this year and completed at the end of November. It required three stories of scaffolding, an extension ladder, some projection and lots of primer and paint as each artist completed their mural independently. Their designs were reviewed and approved by the Public Art Commission, and the project was sponsored by the Library with matching funds through the Mansfield Art Sector, which is part of the Mansfield Rising Plan through the Richland County Foundation.

The story is to be continued. The library and Mankind Murals are developing programming for 2024 and inviting the public to continue moving the imagination into next year.

The main library plans to set up a table with images of the three murals and all three designs have been transformed into full-sized coloring sheets. The interior display will include artist bios, and photography of the murals and be up now through sometime in January.

"This will just be something fun for guests to interact with while we prep the bigger programs," says Jessica Ney, Library Communications Director. "We plan to incorporate an imagination-related contest and a spring interactive story time program."

Early next year, additional creative opportunities will arise that are inspired by murals like these.

A story and poetry submission based on the "Books Move Your Imagination" project will be held through the library and will take place in the Spring and Summer of 2024. There will be a category for youth, young adult, and adult writers to submit stories, poems, and literature based on the murals at the library and beyond. Images of all local downtown murals will be cataloged for the storytelling submission, which promises to add layers and pages of content to Mansfield's growing collection of public art. Stories that can be inspired by each of the murals in Mansfield, and will be hosted in a curated collection on the MRCPL's website.

A storytime program in the Summer of 2024 will help celebrate the culmination of creativity by public artists on this project, readings of locally submitted stories, and hopefully continue to move imaginations and inspire artists, writers, and readers of all ages in the community. Go to [mrcpl.org](http://mrcpl.org) to view images of the three new murals, read artist bios, and find more information about MRCPL's additional public art installations.



"Wild About Books" by artist Robin Shoup



"Right at the Tip of the Mind" by artist Demetrius Howe

## Hospice of North Central Ohio receives grant for wheelchair pads

The Board of Directors at The Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up Foundation, Newark, OH, has approved a grant in the amount of \$912 to fund the purchase of wheelchair comfort armrest pads for patients under the care of Hospice of North Central Ohio (HNCO).

The special design memory foam pads are made from memory foam sheepskin to better provide pressure relief for hospice and palliative care patients confined to wheelchairs. They will be available to qualified HNCO patients and their families free-of-charge.

## •Donors can give a gift, get a gift

(Continued from Front Page)

RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Local bloodmobiles are scheduled for:

Wednesday, Dec. 13, 7 am to 1 pm, K of C Hall, 208 Vernon Rd., Shelby; and noon to 6 pm, Richland Mall RSMO, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

Friday, Dec. 15, 8 am to 1 pm, OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital, 335 Glessner Ave., Mansfield

Tuesday, Dec. 19, noon to 6 pm, Saint Paul Lutheran Church, 48 Church St., Bellville

Wednesday, Dec. 20, 1-6 pm, Planktown Country Market, 1921 Free Rd., Shiloh

Saturday, Dec. 23, 8 am to 2 pm, Richland Mall, Ontario

Wednesday, Dec. 27, noon to 6 pm, Richland Mall RSMO, Ontario

Thursday, Dec. 28, 9 am to 3 pm, Mansfield Engineered Components, 1776 Harrington Memorial, Mansfield

Friday, Dec. 29, 10 am to 3 pm, YMCA, 750 Scholl Rd., Mansfield

Brianna Stone, at The Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up Foundation stated, "We're beyond grateful for our members who believe in their communities and non-profit missions throughout our service areas. They're invested and passionate enough to round up their monthly bills with The Energy Cooperative. Because of our members, the Operation Round-Up Foundation can boast lifetime awarded grant numbers of over 4 million dollars. Sometimes, the funds cover a minor effort, like comfortable armrests for an ailing patient, and other times, extensive efforts, like upgraded playground equipment for an elementary. Regardless of the project, the impact is evident to those involved, the organization, and their community. As the foundation's chairman, I'm honored to continue to witness the progress made in the cities, villages, and communities around us through these wonderful organizations."

Ralph Tomassi, HNCO Chief Development Officer/Senior Administrator added, "The Energy Cooperative through their Operation Round Up grant program continues to make a positive impact on the level of quality hospice care received in their service areas. Our front-line caregivers are better equipped to be the best version of themselves thanks in part to the grant support they have and continue to receive from the Energy cooperative"

The Energy Cooperative Operation Round Up program was established by their board of directors in 2005. The program is designed to provide members with the opportunity to round up bills to the nearest dollar and then disseminate the funds to local charities in the cooperative's service areas.

Call 800-952-2207 for more information. HNCO is a 501c3 non-profit organization.



## Crumbl Cookies opens in Ontario

Photos and Article By Traci Little

Crumbl Cookies celebrated its grand opening in Ontario, Friday morning, Dec. 8. The Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development held a ribbon cutting at 8 am in front of the new location at 2152 Walker Lake Rd. The store hours are Monday through Thursdays from 8 am to 10 pm and Friday and Saturday from 8 am to midnight.

Jennifer Wagner from the Chamber said, “We are so thrilled to be here today and to celebrate! We are so grateful for your investment in Ontario and Richland County! Everyone is going to be flocking here to Crumbl Cookies in Ontario.”

Ontario Mayor, Randy Hutchinson, commented, “I think you’ll do very well here, and it will save me about an hour drive to get some cookies for my daughter. Thank you for investing in Ontario and we wish you the best of luck.”

Doc Stumbo and Miss Ontario, Jaslyn Lopez, were also in attendance to celebrate.

Owner Landon Ball, a Utah native, welcomed those in attendance. “Thank you everyone for being here and for all of your support. We really appreciate it and feel all of the love and support. We love the community and how welcoming everyone has been. It’s been tremendous.”

“Yesterday was our soft opening and it wasn’t so soft – it was very busy and that’s a great problem to have. My wife and I fell in love over sharing a box of Crumbl Cookies. We’d get a box of six every week and cut it into fourths and share them together. That was years ago when I was playing college ice hockey.”

“We’re happy to be here in Ohio! We have a family and I’m a family man! Crumbl Cookies is all about family and enjoying cookies with your family and friends. We’re not here on Sunday and I actually get fined if I’m here in the store on a Sunday! We employ over seventy people in your community, and we try to be truly competitive with wages. Crumbl gives back; whenever you see a Crumbl in the community it adds value and we’re so happy to be here!”

Whether you need dessert delivery, curbside pickup, or something else, Crumbl Cookies makes it easy to order online and through their app. There are weekly flavors that changes every week. Their menu rotates to give you six gourmet flavors to experience! Earn Loyalty Crumbs toward free cookies with the Crumbl App!

## This Week's Pet Looking for A Forever Home



### Reacher

This three year old is such a wiggle butt! He is incredibly happy to meet new people and is one of the friendliest dogs at the shelter. He wants to be friends with everyone!

While playing, Reacher sprinted from toys back to people for affection and back to toys. Reacher takes treats incredibly nicely, and he seems potty trained!

Reacher also loves sprinting

and go, go, going. also He is a ton of fun and love! Come meet Reacher!

Reacher has been at the shelter for two months and is available at the Richland County Dog Shelter in Mansfield.

Those interested in meeting him or any other dog, can contact or visit the Richland County Dog Warden’s Office and Shelter. Hours are 11 am to 4:15 pm Monday–Friday and 10 am to 2 pm on Saturday.

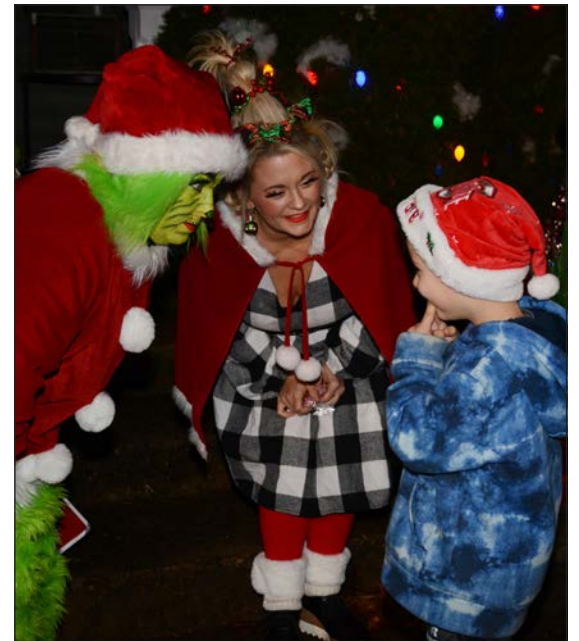
Currently, adoptions are on a schedule, based on the time the dog has been at the shelter. dogs that have been at the shelter for more than a year are \$50, dogs there more than six months are \$100, dogs at the shelter longer than three months are \$125, and dogs there less than three months are \$150. This fee includes spay/neuter, microchip, dog license, and some vaccines.

The shelter’s current needs are volunteers to walk and play with the dogs as well as fill kongs for the dogs to play with when they are in their kennel, help with laundry or dishes, or clean the yard. The shelter uses a lot of bleach, laundry detergent and dog treats and welcomes donations.

*Bellville Yule Log & Tree Lighting Ceremony • Dec. 7 • Photos By Jeff Hoffer*



Bellville Meet & Greet Homes • Dec. 9 • Photos By Jeff Hoffer



Bellville Christmas Parade • December 9 • Photos By Jeff Hoffer



Bellville Christmas Parade • December 9 • Photos By Jeff Hoffer



## ECC provides 10 tips to help children with special needs enjoy the holidays

The holidays are upon us, and while there's loads of merry-making and fun to be had – the changes and sensations of the season can add stress to the lives of children with special needs and their families. The Episcopal Center for Children (ECC), a nonprofit organization serving children with special needs ages 5–14 in the greater Washington, DC area, offers the following tips to help.

“Children with special needs enjoy the holidays but they are especially sensitive to the changes in routines that the holidays bring,” said Stephanie Nash, LICSW, president and CEO of ECC. “Making a plan, thinking about your child's needs, and adjusting your expectations can help you create a positive holiday experience for the entire family.”

**Tip #1** – Make a plan for the holidays and share it with your family. Create a schedule for your family's holiday activities and post it for your child to see. You may find it helpful to use pictures to help a young child. Talk about the schedule with your child, so he or she can anticipate what will happen.

**Tip #2** – Remind your family about holiday plans. Review the schedule. Discuss the schedule with others in your home, so they understand what is going on and how they can best support your child with special needs (and everyone else in the family), so everyone can have a fun holiday.

**Tip #3** – For holiday gatherings, give your child a job and a plan. Ask your child to help collect coats, give out treats, or greet arrivals. Rehearse the plan. Give your child a schedule or plan for a festive occasion so he or she knows what to anticipate and when things will happen.

**Tip #4** – Maintain routines as much as possible. There may be special activities for the holidays, but try to keep your child's schedule as close to “normal” as possible. Routines are key for helping children coping with special needs, and it's especially important for children to stick to regular medication and sleep schedules as much as possible.

**Tip #5** – If your child is sensitive to unfamiliar smells, help manage them. Cinnamon is a common holiday fragrance. One way to help a child experience this smell minimally (and gauge

reaction to it), is to add cinnamon to play compound before an event. Ask guests visiting your home to not wear heavy perfumes if your child is sensitive to them and think about other smells like evergreens.

**Tip #6** – Eat healthy foods and consider how new or special foods impact your child. During the holidays there are all sorts of fun foods and treats to enjoy. Some children are more affected than others by dietary changes. Pay attention to your child's moods and how diet and situational changes may be impacting him or her. If you are at an event, bring along food that is familiar to your child if you think it may be needed.

**Tip #7** – Take breaks when needed. Sometimes children need a break from the hubbub of holiday activities and busyness. Fill a bag or backpack with a few favorite toys, games or activities. If you see your child is getting stressed, get out the bag and find a quiet spot to play.

**Tip #8** – Do not allow presents to be a hindrance to enjoyment. Toy packaging today can frustrate children and parents alike. Children who have trouble with fine motor skills may find unwrapping some gifts frustrating. You can adjust packages to their comfort level by loosening ribbons and paper, or pre-cutting fasteners. Ask others who give your child gifts to be aware of his or her needs when it comes to wrapping presents.

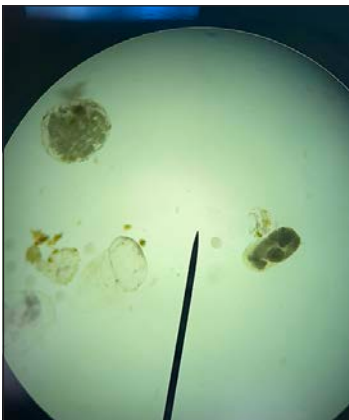
Some children find it disorienting to unwrap things that are new and unfamiliar to them. If that is the case for your child, wrap a few favorite toys for your child to unwrap.

**Tip #9** – Get your child into the spirit of the season through gift giving. Gift giving provides an opportunity to practice social skills. Help your child make a gift for someone else, and practice how to give the gift to that person. Let your child experience the joy of giving.

**Tip #10** – Give your child the gift of your attention. Holidays can be busy for grown-ups and children. Make sure you spend a few minutes of quality time with your child every day. Give your full attention. Practice active listening, where you listen to what your child is saying and then repeat it back to them to demonstrate that you are listening. Focus on offering connection and support.

The ECC is a nondenominational, nonprofit organization that has been dedicated to serving the needs of children and their families for the past 125 years.

In June 2019, the ECC suspended operation for its K-8 therapeutic school for children with emotional challenges from the greater Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area. The Board of Directors continues to be committed to its longstanding mission of serving children in determining plans for the ECC's future.



**THE BIOLOGY AND OCEANUS CLASSES** at Ontario High School studied embryology using live sea urchins. Students got to hold and observe the sea urchins. Afterwards, the gametes were extracted and the students were able to see fertilization and the start of zygote formation under the microscopes. The remaining urchins were returned to finish life in their new salt water tank.



Kirkjufell, “Snæfellsnes” or “Grundarfjörður” Iceland  
Photo By Mark Shutt





## Senate votes to provide property tax relief

State Senator Mark Romanchuk (R-Ontario) announced the Ohio Senate passed House Bill 187, providing immediate property tax relief for eligible seniors and disabled veterans.

House Bill 187 increases the income eligibility amount from \$36,100 to \$75,000. Increasing the exemption amount and expanding eligibility will provide direct tax relief to those most impacted by rising property valuations.

“We took a step in the right direction by prioritizing significant property tax relief for those most vulnerable and in the greatest need of help right now,” said Senator Romanchuk.

“I have heard from my constituents and understand there is a keen need for greater property tax relief across the board. There is a lot more we can do to accomplish that and Ohioans can be sure we will work hard to achieve this goal.”

For now, factors considered for an individual to qualify for the homestead exemption will include that a household income is at or below \$75,000, and at least one of the homeowners must be 65 years or older, or permanently and totally disabled, or the surviving spouse of someone who otherwise qualified and is at least 59 years of age.

Increased exemption amounts for the next three years will be:

Incomes of \$36,100 and below, \$30,000 exemption; \$36,101–\$49,000, \$22,500 exemption; \$49,001–\$62,000, \$15,000 exemption; \$62,001–\$75,000, \$7,500 exemption; and disabled veterans exemption amount increases from \$50,000 to \$60,000.

House Bill 187 now moves to the Ohio House for concurrence.

For more information on House Bill 187 visit <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb187>



**TAKING A BREAK** from the difficult work of writing persuasive essays, several sixth grade ELA students at Ontario Middle School opted to test their creativity by “building a snowman” using Google Slides. Pictured are some of those who opted to have their work judged by the two students who were serving as Ontario Middle School principals for the day. (Left photo) Cam and Brody found out that being a principal includes making lots of tough decisions.



**IN COOPERATION WITH THE ONTARIO KEY CLUB**, students at Ontario donated 3,599 non-perishable food items for local families in need.

## RPH will close Dec. 18 for training

Richland Public Health will be closing at noon on Monday, Dec. 18, for staff training.

The closing hours will include the WIC offices in Richland County and Ashland County.

Richland Public Health will return to regular business hours on Tuesday, Dec. 19.



**VOLUNTEERS** from Southside Christian Church offer nativity sets as gifts for children going through Saturday's "Deck the Halls" event at the ARC Empowerment Center.

## ARC Empowerment Center to host "God Sends a Baby" presentation Monday, Dec. 18

The ARC Empowerment Center, 378 Park Ave. West, will host "God Sends a Baby," a 45-minute presentation by Paul Lintern, of carols and the Christmas story, Monday, Dec. 18, at noon and 7 pm.

The event, free and open to all, will receive an offering toward replacing the boiler at the 110-year-old building, which served Central United Methodist until 2000, and Bethesda Fellowship until 2019.

The ARC is a faith-based focus on addition recovery with a variety of support ministries for the neighborhood and recovery community.

Featured in the program is Lintern's 20-minute telling of the Christmas story, using the words of Martin Luther of the 1500s, compiled by Roland Bainton of Yale Divinity School in the 1960s.

"I first presented this as a high school senior for Youth Sunday at my church in Wooster," Lintern says.

"Fifty years and 400 performances later, it still is a joy to share," because of its depth, joy and relevance, he adds.

Lintern will also lead a sing-along of Christmas carols with rewritten lyrics, some as commercial carols that now embrace the Christmas story, and others as traditional hymns with newly written Christmas lyrics.

"An example would be a song about Gabriel, the Angel, to the tune of 'Frosty, the Snowman,'" Lintern says.

Mike Smith will accompany the singing on the pipe organ, which sat unused for 19 years until Smith oversaw its renewal two years ago.

"This is a beautiful instrument in a beautiful building, and I love the ministry they are doing here. Organ music is special at any time, but especially at Christmas," Smith says.

The ARC is decorated throughout the building, because of an event last Saturday in which nearly 500 children received

gifts, hats, books and nativity sets in an event called deck the halls.

Those attending Monday's events will be invited to tour the building's decorations.

"The first performance is timed to allow people to come for their lunch hour, and they are welcome to eat lunch during the performance," Amanda Nichols, ARC director, announced. "And it allows a time for people who don't like to drive at night."

The event will duplicate the noon presentation.

Parking west of the building provides best access to the performance area.

The building has undergone a general facelift including a new roof and extensive painting and interior decorating.

"The boiler is next; it is on its last breath, and we need something much more efficient, and functional," Nichols says.

"It is not the most glamorous fundraising goal, but it is the most necessary," she adds.

## Scholarships available

Various local, state and national scholarships are available through the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). Each has separate requirements.

The Jared Mansfield Chapter local scholarship is open to all students, both genders, who will be attending OSU-Mansfield, NCSC, or the Dwight Schar College of Nursing, Mansfield and pursuing any field of study. The local scholarship is open to any student currently enrolled at any of the above schools, as well as high school graduating seniors. Call scholarship chair Joedy Studer at 419-631-1015 for more information. The completed application must be postmarked by April 15.

The Ohio Society Daughters of the American Revolution awards the "Wings of Eagles" scholarship to graduating high school seniors, including those completing a certified home school program, in the amount of \$1,000 each. Awards are based on academic excellence and financial need.

All applicants must be citizens of the United States and legal residents of the state of Ohio and must attend an accredited college or university in the United States. Visit OSDAR at [ohiodar.org](http://ohiodar.org) to obtain a scholarship application. All applicants must be sponsored by the local DAR chapter and applications must be submitted to the local chapter by Jan. 31.

The National Daughters of the American Revolution also offers scholarships in many different majors. This year all students will submit their applications using an online process. The direct link to the online application submission portal is [dar.academicworks.com](http://dar.academicworks.com).

Emailed or mailed applications will no longer be accepted. The deadline is Jan. 31. Call scholarship chair Joedy Studer at 419-631-1015 for information.

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# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## ONTARIO VS WILLARD HIGH SCHOOL SWIM MEET · DEC. 5



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**CLEAR FORK VS GALION SEVENTH GRADE BASKETBALL · DEC. 6**  
**PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**CLEAR FORK VS GALION EIGHTH GRADE BASKETBALL · DEC. 6**  
**PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

LEXINGTON VS WOOSTER VARSITY BASKETBALL · DEC. 8  
PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## LEXINGTON VS WOOSTER JUNIOR VARSITY BASKETBALL · DEC. 8 PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



# Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## ONTARIO VS RIVER VALLEY VARSITY BASKETBALL · DEC. 7





## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## Local high school basketball teams have another busy week

By Kris Leiter

Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2023

**Boys High School Basketball • Lucas at Mt. Gilead**

As Lucas Head Basketball Coach Taylor Iceman and the mighty Cubs of Lucas continued their winning tradition last Tuesday evening, they sent the Mt. Gilead Indians back to the reservation with a 58-22 victory in a non-conference win.

Winning on the road isn't easy, but the Cubs seem to find a way. Iceman and the Cubs bring another seasoned lineup of upperclassmen into the 2023 campaign.

They are "Loaded for Bear" you might say, with six seniors and three juniors filling out the first nine spots in the roster.

As for height, the seven of the "tall trees" of the Cubs ring in from 6' 0" to 6' 4," definitely well rounded.

Leading the Cub pack in double figures was Aiden Culler with 22 points with almost a third of the total points! Rounding out the scoring leaders was Logan Toms and Zack Diehl, each with 9 points.

I have to give a hats off to Mt. Gilead's Mitch Sayers, senior, cashing in at 6' 5", who plays primarily junior varsity.

Mitch did get some varsity action and contributed five points to the cause. Great Job Mitch!

Sayers held his own in the paint; even a few Cub players were slowed down by his daunting height and stature on defense.

Mt. Gilead primary had a younger lineup of mostly juniors and sophomores, but they did have some good defense moments at times. They were not afraid to scrap with the Cubs on defense.

Iceman is no stranger to the game of basketball, being a Lucas Alumni himself. I would expect them to have another successful year on the hardwood. They also made another nice run into the football playoffs once again!

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2023

**Boys High School Basketball – River Valley at Ontario**

I got a hot tip from Ontario's Athletic Director Jeff Fisher earlier last week.

And also being my Alma Mater, I figured I'm game. After watching Ontario put up 95 points against Crestview recently, I couldn't resist.

Fisher says, "It might be a good idea to swing over to Ontario. River Valley might be bringing some high scoring shooters." And the Vikings did just that..shoot the lights out!

Unfortunately, the Ontario Warriors were on the short end of the 87-63 score at the O-rena in Ontario.

Coach Jerry Moten probably wishes he could have the 95 points that the Warriors scored recently at Crestview, where that same 95 points was a bit shy of John Kurtz' Crestview Cougars, who topped Ontario's 95 with their own 105 points!

Keep an eye out for the Warriors, They may be 0-2 thus far, but the season is still young.

With a lineup of 6' 0" to 6' 5" rounding out the top 12 players on the roster, they should be good for successful 2023 basketball season!

Friday, Dec. 8, 2023

**Boys High School Basketball • Ashland at Mansfield Senior**

Mansfield Senior and Coach Marquis Sykes did not disappoint their fans in the home opener of the 2023-'24 basketball season last Friday night.

The TYgers bring seven seniors and three juniors back this year, and with that experience, it should be a fun run for the team!

The TYgers prevailed with a 59-44 victory over the Ashland Arrows at the infamous Pete Henry Gynasium. I love TYger Mural on the wall!

Both teams were aggressive with their staunt defense and holding the Arrows to 44 points is no easy task. Coach Jason Hess has manned the Arrows program for years a, but the TYgers were not going to let their loyal fans walk away empty handed!

Leading the TYgers in double figures was Kyevi Roane with 18

buckets and Karion Lindsey contributing 13 to the point total.

Both Mansfield and Ashland had a nice scoring runs at times. Ashland had 11-2 run in the second quarter and Mansfield a 13-1 run in the third quarter!

Let's also give some Kudos to the Ashland.

Thier top scorers were Issac Stewart and Gabe Baith in double figures for the Arrows as well, with 10 points each!

It was good to see the crowd excited after coming off of great football run into the playoffs against a mighty Toledo Central Catholic!

Saturday, Dec. 9, 2023

**Boys High School Basketball • Crestview at Colonel Crawford**

I love the older gyms. Good games. Good teams from the past. Packed house...you gotta love it!

I still remember the gym and the towering Dave Froelich, former coach of the Colonel Crawford Eagles, who always had successful teams. Good memories from my days of officiating. Good times.

This past Saturday, two undefeated country schools had a battle — Crestview 4-0 and Colonel Crawford 3-0. Someone had to win.

The showdown was in North Robinson in the "The Nest," home of the Colonel Crawford Eagles.

John Kurtz never disappoints with another nail biter victory over the Colonel Crawford Eagles with a 40-39 "heart attack" victory once again, leaving the Cougars still undefeated!

Let's rewind two weeks ago when Crestview escaped the lurking Ontario Warriors with a rare 105-95 win. Kurtz wasn't exactly chilling on the bench, as Ontario would sneak up and almost bite and take the lead. As Dejavu would have it, Saturday night was no different with the Eagles.

Except both defenses were not budging in this game, as the total score was 79 points combined. Ironic, but yet the intensity was no different than the Ontario game.

Colonel Crawford led the entire game except well into the fourth quarter, The Cougars kept creeping back, slowly but surely and tied the game at 35-35 with 4:45 remaining on the clock!

It was rockin in that gym! There were a few more nip and tuck lead changes and it was tied again 39-39 with 34 seconds left on the clock!

And with 6 seconds left on the clock, Colonel Crawford broke from the timeout and threw up a shot to take the lead

And the gym was waiting. And Crawford missed. Victory goes to the Cougars!

It came down to the last seconds of the game and it was fun game to watch!

Leading the pack in double figures was Justice Thompson with double figures of 20 points! Ironically he had half the points of the total score!

Another great game was had by all and definitely fit the script from these two dynamic basketball teams!

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## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

# Ohio Social Sports League programs begin in January

By Kris Leiter

Remember a few weeks ago, I featured an article on the sport of pickleball? I must confess, it was a Segue premonition to this article: The Ohio Social Sports League.

And what exactly is The Ohio Social Sports League? I'm glad you asked.

The Ohio Social Sports League is now in Mansfield, and it's indoors — free of snow and cold windy weather.

Now that the high school basketball season is underway, I thought I would give that adult “kid” a little press time. It's for adults 18 years and older, allowing even some of the older folks to enjoy a little fun and recreation.

Remember the name Gui Alvez, the pickleball guy who was the tournament host at Lakewood Raquet Club a few weeks ago? Yep, he's the man.

Gui Alvez (pronounced like the letter in the alphabet, “G”) Is the Director of Richland County's newly birthed Ohio Social Sports League.

“I'm very excited to see local residents joining the League of Adult recreational sports,” said Alvez.

He was kind enough to educate me on the new infant “sports” league here in Richland County. Leagues have been implemented across the United States for a number of years now. Cleveland and Columbus have also had leagues for awhile.

The Ohio Social Sports League actually envelops four adult recreation sports: dodgeball, volleyball, soccer, and of course, pickleball.

First, a childhood favorite: dodgeball (actually, it wasn't mine growing up — I wasn't exactly a speed demon getting out of the way).

And in case you're wondering if this level of sports is beyond your skill level, Alvez informed me these are recreational sports.

“Anybody can play as a novice, never even playing the sport previously and enjoy good camaraderie with fellow friends. It's made for your normal everyday person.”

“The January volleyball league will be expanding into two separate skill levels: a recreational level for the novice and a competitive level for the more serious minded volleyball player. We're also very excited to be starting a sand volleyball league in the spring.”

As I continued my chat with Alvez, I mentioned to him that I had just recently noticed the Ohio Adult Social Sports League on Facebook and the advertisements and figuring it must be a new type of organization.

“Richland County is pretty much the new kid on the block,” said Alvez .

Most of us have played the four sports sometime in our lifetime, even as an adult. I think what makes this league unique is that it's basically a little more structured in terms of having those four sports in an organized fashion together under one “umbrella” if you will.

It's similar to finding a weight loss class versus working out individually.

With this structure, it gives people an opportunity to know that there's some type of anticipation looking forward to seeing teammates on a weekly basis for 6–8 weeks of play and a champion. Let's not forget about the camaraderie and friendships that grow.

Of course, since the pandemic, I think it's a great opportunity to bring people back together and benefit from some exercise and sports. A lot of people aren't exercise aficionados, but when you “marry” the sports and exercise together, I think it gets people a little more excited.

A lot of us are competitive by nature, so again, another great benefit to having this organization here locally and it looks like it's going to continue to grow.

Another cool little thing about this league is that they are expanding into other cities and you can even be the director of one of these leagues.

Alvez says, “There are perks of being a director, such as having your playing fee waived if there a certain number of participants.”

So, everybody got those gym clothes ready? Alvez encourages everyone, “Come out and have some fun!”

The Ohio Social Sports League is also on social media as well. It's very easy to register and you can sign up as a team, individual or free agent for any sport.

Volleyball has two levels: novice and competitive. A free t-shirt is included with the entry fee and games are played at the Salvation Army and other venues. Competitive has certified officials and games are held at 6 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm and 9 pm, weekly. Games begin Tuesdays, starting Jan. 2, and end Feb. 22. Cost is \$65.

Dodgeball has a novice level beginning Jan. 4. Games are held at the Salvation Army and other venues on Thursdays at 6 pm, 7 pm, 8 pm and 9 pm, weekly. A free t-shirt is included with the entry fee. The season is nine weeks and cost is \$55.

Contact Gui Alvez with any questions at 954-803-8655 or email [gui.cr.alves@gmail.com](mailto:gui.cr.alves@gmail.com). For information visit [www.ohiosocialsports.com](http://www.ohiosocialsports.com).



**BUCKEYE EXPRESS CAR WASH** is a sponsor of the Ohio Social Sports Volleyball League. Empire Sportswear donated the jerseys.



**THE GREEN TEAM SLOANE** won the Ohio Social Sports League inaugural volleyball season.

## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## Hometown Heroes:

## NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series driver Jonathan Shafer

By Kris Leiter

In this business, I learn something new every day. It never ceases to amaze me. Remember my take in life, I always like to give credit where credit is due. I love my job! The perks are awesome, including sitting in the press box with our local media watching amazing athletes do some amazing things. I am very blessed to meet a lot good people on my weekly assignments. There are always new and exciting things I learn. Every. Single. Time.

As I chat it up with players, coaches and athletic directors, I am still overwhelmed at the skills that these young men and women possess. From our local high schools to collegiate and yes, even to the professional ranks.

Professional ranks, from this area? Absolutely! Ohhh yes indeed... and there are many. And my list of athletes from here in Richland County is growing!

As the next few months start rolling by, I would like to introduce you to these "heroes" of Richland County and begin a "Hometown Heroes" series.

And to you, my fellow readers, if you know of anyone who has had an athletic career in the Richland County area and has excelled into the professional ranks of any given sport, I would love to write a column on it.

How about a four-year-old from Ashland driving a mini sprint car? The young Jonathan Shafer had not yet entered kindergarten when he began racing and is now a mere 18 years old.

For the past 14 years, this young man has been racing and is now a driver in the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series!

I recently had the privilege to interview this special young man and his family, mother and father, Todd and Angie.

This interview was quite different, taking place at Osgar's Auto Body, right here in Mansfield. With the help of Mike Osgar, I was able to grab an interview during the Shafer family's visit to the shop.

Angie Shafer was going to be bringing lunch in for the crew and like with any scoop, it's hard to say no to an offer for interview and food.

As I was awaiting the Shafer Family to arrive, Osgar asked me if I wanted to take a quick tour of one the fines body shops in Mansfield. Again, I couldn't say "Yes" fast enough.

During my tour, Mike Osgar was able to fill me in about his racing career back in the day. His father was also a race car driver.

The puzzle pieces began to fit together when he told me Todd Shafer is a former NASCAR Driver and drove Sprint cars as well. Shafer and Osgar raced on the circuit back in the mid to late 1990s.

And another little bit on info, Mike Osgar is very supportive of Veterans in this community and has been very integral with helping Jonathan's success on moving up the ranks of professional auto racing.

If you ask most kids what they remember from the age of four,

many will most likely not have much to report. Most were not even in kindergarten.

At that young age of four, Jonathan was starting to build his racing resumé. From 4-12 he competed in the quarter midgets (65 mph) with 100 victories. At 12 he began with the Outlaws, dirt track racing in Millbridge and Salsbury, NC. He ranked in the top three multiple times and at thirteen began racing full stock - Pro Late Model. (120 mph) He set a track record and won the pole at Lucas Oil Raceway. He also raced at Indiana and Michigan.

From 14-16 years old, he raced for Team Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Micro Sprint (Dirt). His first start was in a late model car at 14. He finished seventh and was in the top 3 six times and top 10 twelve times!

At 15 years old, he raced in the USAC Midget (115 mph) and placed in the top 3 two times with two heat race wins.

He competed at the Tulsa, OK, Chili Bowl Track and had his first start for Kenny Coon Motorsports! He raced at Indianapolis, Kansas and Missouri.

Well, you would think all those accolades would fill a resumé quite nicely...right? Nope, there's more where there that came from, that's only the first 9 years!

From 15-18 years old, he raced in the Championship Auto Racing Series (CARS), co-owned by Dale Earnhardt Jr. and Kevin Harvick. He finished in the top 5 and top 10 multiple times.

"The CARS is a very tough series to race in, let alone to finish as well as Jonathan did," said Jonathan's dad, Todd Shafer. "In the past three years, Jonathan has raced in this tough series, he captured the pole two times!"

How many 15 year old young men are racing these machines at this age? I'm still amazed!

So, let's peer into Jonathan's next milestone. At 16 years old, most young men are just now getting their driver's license, but Jonathan began racing the ARCA Series (180 mph). His first race was at Dover Raceway in Delaware and he finished seventh. His second race was at Iowa Speedway where he took fourth.

Jonathan has been racing the holy grail, the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series, the past two years! The trucks go an average 175-200 mph and he has raced at Martinsville, Nashville and Miami.

"These three races were really good for Jonathan's experience in excelling to the next level of racing," said Todd Shafer. "As you move up, you need to be approved by other industry professionals, in terms of being safe and following protocol."

"Since Jonathan is now 18 years old, he will be allowed to race on every major racetrack in the truck series."

"He will be racing against the likes of grown veteran racecar drivers who are in their 30s, 40s and 50s, who race professionally week in and week out."

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“There are a lot of hoops to jump through, unlike other Sports,” said Shafer. “In various other sports, your talent can carry you to the next level. In this industry of motorsports, it’s a little bit different. People have to approve you as a driver before advancing to the next tier.”

Another little caveat, according to NASCAR rules, veteran driver Brett Bodine, who is delegated in approving rookie drivers, typically will require the rookie to have a yellow stripe across the back of the bumper. This indicates to veteran drivers that this is a first year driver, just to allow other drivers to follow safety protocol.

Todd was telling me a really awesome item of interest about Jonathan’s superb driving habits.

“Since Jonathan will be a rookie, he would normally be required to have a yellow stripe displayed as well, but according to Bodine and others who have been observing Jonathan, he has been doing extremely well with his driving requirements. NASCAR may exempt him from having to display the ‘Rookie Stripe.’”

Numerous Racing Professionals have coined Jonathan as the next “Kyle Larson.”

“Jonathan is clearly the next Kyle Larson. He has the amazing ability to race on dirt and asphalt as well,” said Jacob Seelman, *Sprint Car and Midget Magazine*.

“Hands down, Jonathan is the next superstar of our time. NASCAR teams will soon be knocking on his door,” said Doc Love, *Race 22 Magazine*.

“My younger brother is my biggest fan and travels to all my races,” said Jonathan.

Some may not realize the amount of stress a driver’s body undergoes in a three-hour race. The car’s cabin can reach temperatures of 100 degrees.

Shafer, who was a veteran of the racing circuit himself years ago says, “The amount of G forces (4 to 6 Gs) can physically wear you out, it’s quite an exhausting feeling, even to the point of some drivers experiencing nausea.”

As for this reporter, I think I’ll stick to my day job, but hats off to The Shafer Family and Mike Osgar and his staff at Osgar’s Autobody for allowing me the privilege to educate and introduce you to our first “Hometown Hero!”

I have friends in the field of motorsports. It’s a great family adventure and from hearing their conversations, I know it takes a lot of personal financing to keep the wheels rolling!

It takes many sponsors to keep gas in the tank, tires and numerous items that I’m sure I forgot, but I know it all goes for a good cause.

Any business or individual who would like to help sponsor Shafer’s truck can contact Todd Shafer at 419-566-0044, visit <https://jonathanshafer.com/> or visit on social media at <https://twitter.com/jshaferracing>, <https://www.instagram.com/jonathanshaferracing/?hl=en> and <https://www.facebook.com/jonathanshaferracing?mibextid=PzaGJu>.



Jonathan Shafer (center) and his parents Angie and Todd Shafer



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Sealed bids for Gasoline and Diesel Fuel for January 1, 2024, through December 31, 2024 will be opened at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 28, 2023 by Kris Knapp, Service-Safety Director of the City of Ontario.

Specifications may be obtained electronically from the Service-Safety Director. Email a request to [kknapp@ontarioohio.org](mailto:kknapp@ontarioohio.org), or a paper copy is available at the City of Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio 44906.

All bids should be sealed in an envelope, clearly marked: 2024 GASOLINE & DIESEL FUEL BID, the name of the Bidder, and include a CERTIFIED CHECK OR BOND on a solvent bank, in the amount of One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00).

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