



# TRIBUNE-COURIER

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

news@tribune-courier.com

11.27.25



## Madison makes necessary cuts after levy failure

The Madison Local School Board met Nov. 19, for a work session, followed by a regular board meeting filled with hard decisions resulting from a levy failure on election day Nov. 4.

At the work session, the board discussed reductions and programming changes and possibilities for future levy options.

During the regular meeting, these changes were announced to the public — most notably, the closing of Mifflin Elementary School. The purpose of the closure is to avoid a negative cash balance at the end of the 2026-'27 school year. The building will remain open for the current school year and will close starting with the 2026-'27 school year. Students at Mifflin will be moved to Eastview Elementary and Madison South Elementary.

The Madison Local Education Association (MLEA) president and Ohio Association of Public School Employees (OAPSE) president will be notified of the board's decision to consider a reduction in force, effective with the 2026-'27 school year. This cut will include at least 26 district-wide administrative, and certified, classified and confidential positions to avoid a negative cash balance at the end of the next school year.

The board also announced fees to play sports. Pay-to-participate fees for the 2026-'27 school year will be \$100 for the first sport and \$75 for the second for high school athletics. Additional sports will not cost extra. Middle school athletics will cost \$75 for the first sport, \$50 for the second and have no cost for additional sports.

High school and middle school clubs and extracurriculars will cost \$25 for the first and \$25 for the second with no cost for additional clubs. Club registration fees still apply.

In contrast to this news, the board celebrated achievements in the district. The Ram Pride Award was presented to Lindsey Frank, eighth grade ELA teacher at the middle school; and Lynette Keiser, administrative assistant at Eastview Elementary.

Students achieving a perfect score on the 2025 Spring Ohio Achievement Test were Nathan Hoffman, American Government; Bryce Tudor, American Government; Abbigale Crist, Eighth Grade Math; Hailey Hedrick, Sixth Grade Math; Milo McCann, Sixth Grade Math; Eleanor Sidwell, Sixth Grade Math; Lincoln Bays, Fifth Grade Math; Joel Robertson, Fifth Grade Math; Leon Couch, Fourth Grade Math; Gabriel Utt, Fourth Grade Math; Myles Klecka, Third Grade Math; Livia Foote, Third Grade Math.

Administrative committee reports included Legislative, Athletic Board of Control, Student Representative's Comments, Facilities, Board Policy, Student Achievement and Superintendent's Update.

Jacob Grove, Career-Technical Director, gave a presentation.

A \$1,000 donation was accepted from VFW Post 3494 (Grace Street) to be used by the RISE Program. A \$1,000 donation came

(Continued on Page 8)



## Madison Middle School hosts first military appreciation breakfast

Photos and Article By Traci Little

Last Friday morning, Nov. 21, from 7-8 am, Madison Middle School proudly hosted its first Military Appreciation Breakfast—an event created to honor the service, sacrifice, and strength of the military families within the Madison community.

The idea began as a conversation between Principal Jordan Nelson and school counselors Jessica Rush and Monique Eberst, who shared a desire to recognize those who dedicate their lives to protecting our country. Understanding the many visible and invisible sacrifices made by active-duty members, veterans, and their families, the team wanted to create a meaningful expression of gratitude. Offering a shared breakfast for military members and their students became the perfect way to show appreciation while also strengthening the sense of community within the school.

In the weeks leading up to the event, school counselors met with students connected to military families during a special lunch meeting. The students learned about the upcoming breakfast and helped prepare a yellow ribbon wall of honor — a display recognizing each active-duty service member and veteran represented in the school community. The meeting also provided an opportunity for students to connect with one another, share experiences, and find common ground in the unique challenges that come with being part of a military family.

As word spread, enthusiasm grew. Seventh-grade teachers had students write heartfelt letters to service members and veterans, while

(Continued on Page 6)



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Mistaya Canyon Banff National Park, Alberta, Canada  
Photo By Mark Shutt

## Herlihy Christmas House open Dec. 11-14

The Herlihy Christmas Open House will be held Thursday through Sunday, Dec. 11-14, from 6-9 pm.

The open house is located at 170 W. Second St., Mansfield, with parking in the Herlihy Funeral Home parking lot

The Christmas house has been a holiday tradition for many years. The family's personal collection is on display and features over 30 Christmas trees, hundreds of Santas, Disney, villages and trains.

This is the 38th year for the display. A minimum \$2 donation is required per person and will be given to local animal shelters and the Miss Ohio Scholarship Program.

For more info or private tours for over 20 people call Terri Herlihy at 419-544-9863 or email [terri52270@gmail.com](mailto:terri52270@gmail.com)

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Serving Ontario, Lexington, Madison, Bellville and Butler Communities in  
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## THE ENTERTAINMENT EXAMINER

— By Ian Stumbo —

The movie adaptation of *Wicked* was one of the biggest surprises of last year. Now the second half of the story, *Wicked For Good*, tells how Elphaba (Cynthia Erivo) has been exiled and is being labeled as the wicked witch.

Glinda, played by Ariana Grande, is trying to take care business as usual around Oz while giving her friend Elphaba the benefit of the doubt. Elphaba is trying to tell all of Oz that the wizard (Jeff Goldblum) is a fraud.

Erivo and Grande bring back their terrific performances especially Grande who really brings more depth to Glinda as she is trying to balance many elements of the story. The movie also ties into *The Wizard of Oz* story which is when the movie really gets going.

The songs in *Wicked for Good* are not as memorable though the song "No Good Deed" is a highlight and Erivo nails it as is

a song between Elphaba, Glinda and the Wizard.

*Wicked for Good* is a solid second half of this story though the movie struggles to find its footing early on and that makes it not as entertaining as it could be. The second half of the movie is much more serious and not as fun and whimsical as the first part.

*The Wizard of Oz* stuff, as I said, makes the movie really move, though not all of it is resolved and the movie did leave me with some questions as to why some choices were made.

*Wicked For Good* concludes this story well enough that fans of the first movie, musical or book should find enough to enjoy. Its too bad this second part is not as satisfying as the first because if it was both together could have been an even better experience.



Photo by Damon Callis

**Day Trippin' With Damon** – Kirby's Mill is located in Richfield, OH. Jim Kirby constructed his mill in 1922 to produce hydroelectric power for his home and workshop. He constructed a working model of a grist mill when he was still in school, indicating an early interest in water powered machinery. His millwheel was the first of its kind, designed so that its weight rested on ball bearings. It could turn with just a trickle of water. Construction cost was \$2,300. In 1978 it was added to the National Registry of Historic Places.

# News Briefs

The Ontario Board of Education will hold a special meeting in the Ontario High School Library, 467 Shelby-Ontario Rd., Ontario, on Wednesday, Dec. 3, at 6 pm. The purpose of this special board meeting is for a board work session to discuss the potential OSFC facility remodel project.

★

The 45 annual Light Up Lexington ceremony is scheduled to kick off the holiday season on Monday, Dec. 1, at 6:45 pm.

Winter sports players of Lexington Schools will be presented including basketball, bowling, swim team and wrestling.

The poster contest winners will be announced at the ceremony. Lexington students in first through fourth grades participate and several winners are picked from each grade level. A gift and a certificate from the mayor are given to each winner.

Those attending can visit the reindeer and the museum will have its Lexington Christmas open house starting at 6 pm. There will be cookies and mulled cider.

★

A craft and vendor show will be held Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10 am to 2 pm at the Butler Event Center, 111 W. Elm St, Butler.

Those attending are asked to bring non-perishable food items to help the North Bend Community Produce Distribution.

The event has free admission and lunch will be available.

★

Main Street in Bellville will host its annual family holiday parade on Saturday, Dec. 6, at 11 am.

After the parade, those attending can visit the township building (old fire station) for hot cocoa, cookies, hot dogs, crafts for kids, horse and carriage rides and a visit with Santa.

For parade entry information email [tinascristmasparade@gmail.com](mailto:tinascristmasparade@gmail.com). All activities and refreshments are free. The event is sponsored by the Clear Fork Valley Chamber of Commerce.

★

The public is invited to a "Celebration of Christ Our King" Saturday, Nov. 29 at Trinity Grace Fellowship, 1592 Grace St., Mansfield.

The combined praise and worship service will begin at 4 pm, followed by a potluck dinner in fellowship hall.

The event is being sponsored by Global Methodist churches in Ashland and Mansfield. Clergy and laity from area Global Methodist churches will be involved throughout the service.

This is an opportunity to come together as a greater body of Christ to celebrate and share how He has blessed each of His churches.

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, Nov. 29 and 30. 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 at 11:30 am, February through May, the group will meet at New Life Church of Christ (NLC of C), 195 W. Durbin, Bellville. Cost is \$17 for the meal. Meetings June through December will be held at Der Dutchman, Rt. 96, Bellville. Meals are \$16, with an additional \$2 for pie.

The next meal will Dec. 17 and will be a Christmas luncheon. Image from Mansfield Christian School will perform and officers will be installed.

The group will meet for lunch Dec. 3 at MVP Sports Bar, 275 Park Avenue West. For information visit [www.lexasc.org](http://www.lexasc.org). Dues are \$10 per year.

★

The Pioneer Career and Technology Center Board of Education has changed its regular November board meeting to Monday, Nov. 24, at 6 pm in the Pioneer Board of Education Conference Room.

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist of Bellville, 25 Church St., Bellville, will welcome Demrie Alonzo on Sunday, Nov. 30, at 10:30

am. The subject will be "Making A Difference In the Lives of Immigrants." For information visit [www.allsoulsuuohio.org](http://www.allsoulsuuohio.org).

★

The Richland Rural Life Center, 969 E. Crall Rd., Mansfield, will host its annual Breakfast with Santa event on Saturday, Dec. 6.

The event will include cookie decorating, a visit and photos with Santa and breakfast. Two times slots are available: 8 and 9:30 am. Cost is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children ages 3-11. Children two and under are free when accompanied by an adult.

Breakfast includes pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage, fruit cup and beverage. Purchase advance tickets at <https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/breakfast-with-santa-83>. Seating is limited.

★

Trinity Grace Fellowship, 1592 Grace St., Mansfield, will have a Christmas Carol Sing during its regular 9:30 am service Nov. 30, the first Sunday of Advent. Trinity is looking to hire an experienced choir director to fill a position with an adult volunteer choir. The choir meets Wednesday nights at 6 or 7 pm to prepare for the regular 9:30 am Sunday service. There are approximately 18 singers in the choir, with an experienced pianist/organist and five potential instrument soloists to complement the choir. If interested email: [secretary@trinitygracefellowship.org](mailto:secretary@trinitygracefellowship.org) or call 419-589-5890.

★

Akron Children's Mansfield Behavioral Health Center will host a community coat distribution event on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 10 am to 1 pm, at 1027 S. Trimble Rd., Mansfield.

The donor-funded event is open to the public and will provide new coats (sizes 3T to adult XXL), hats and gloves at no cost for children and adults while supplies last.

All are welcome to come to the event, and receiving care at the center is not a requirement to obtain a coat and other winter items.



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# Church Directory

## Clay Memorial Lutheran Church

1601 Amoy East Rd., Mansfield  
419-747-6882  
Pastor Carol Kilgore  
Sunday School 9:15 am • Sunday Worship 10:30 am

## Clear Fork Alliance Church

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

## First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

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

## First Congregational Church

640 Millsboro Rd., Mansfield  
419-756-3046 • [www.mansfieldfcc.com](http://www.mansfieldfcc.com)  
Pastor Brad Bunn  
8:30 am Chapel • 10:30 am Sanctuary  
10:30 am Sunday School (nursery–high school)  
10:30 am Monday Morning Bible Study  
7:30 am Wednesday Men's Breakfast

## First English Lutheran Church

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

## Grace Episcopal Church

41 Bowman Street, Mansfield  
419-524-2661  
Rev. Christopher D. Hofer, Priest-in-Charge  
Rev. Daniel Orr, Associate Priest  
Worship: Sundays, 8 am and 10:15 am  
Christian Formation for All Ages: Sundays, 9:15 am  
Food Pantry: Thursdays, 9–11 am  
2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 4–6 pm  
[gracemansfield.org](http://gracemansfield.org) • [facebook.com/GraceChurchMansfield](https://facebook.com/GraceChurchMansfield)

## G & M Body & Paint Shop

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

## Wappner Funeral Home

Mansfield • Ontario • Ashland • 419-522-5211

## Lexington Church of Christ

230 Delaware Ave., Lexington  
419-884-1532 • [www.lccoh.com](http://www.lccoh.com)  
Lead Minister Brandon Bogue  
9 am Sunday School • 10 am Sunday Worship

## Lexington Church of the Cross

236 Otterbein Dr., Lexington  
419-884-2150 • [Churchofthecrosslex.com](http://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.

## Lexington Presbyterian Church

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

## Mansfield 1st Presbyterian Church

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 Traditional Sunday Worship  
ADA Accessible Nursery & Children's Programming

## Mansfield Baptist Temple

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

## Oakland Lutheran Church

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

## Ontario United Methodist Church

3540 Park Avenue West., Ontario  
419-529-4345 • [ontarioumc.com](http://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

68 Park Avenue East, Mansfield  
419-522-2813 • [www.stjohnsmansfield.org](http://www.stjohnsmansfield.org)  
Pastor Faith Proietti • 10 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  
Clothing Ministry by appt: 419-512-9817

## Southside Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

2055 Middle-Bellville Rd., Mansfield  
419-756-3436  
Pastor Paul Lintern  
10:45 am Sunday Worship

## Trinity Grace Fellowship

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

## Dayspring seeking sponsors for Christmas tree drive thru event

The Richland County Home is setting up our first annual drive through event for the holiday season. Starting Dec. 11, the community is encouraged to come out to Dayspring and drive around the scenic property to look at decorated Christmas trees that have been sponsored by local businesses and groups from Richland County.

This is a low-cost advertising opportunity for Richland County's businesses, civic groups and other organizations to provide Christmas joy to not only the residents of Dayspring but also give back to the community as a whole. By either supplying a cut Christmas tree, decorating a tree, or both, your group will be advertised all season long, alongside the tree you have sponsored. The winner of best decorated tree will also be announced at a later date.

All trees will need to be decorated by Dec. 10. To provide a tree, decorate a tree or both contact Heather Knipp, Dayspring office manager at 419-774-5894 or email [hknipp@richlandcountyoh.gov](mailto:hknipp@richlandcountyoh.gov).

## Ontario will host annual tree lighting

The City of Ontario's annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held Thursday, Dec. 4, in Marshall Park.

The event will open at 5:45 pm with a special candle light vigil will be held at the pavilion. The candles will be in honor of the memories of those we've lost.

This quiet time of reflection and remembrance invites the community to hold space for loved ones and share their light with family and friends. Candles will be provided.

Hot chocolate and cookies will be served beginning at 6 pm.

The event will include a visit from Santa and performances from Rhapsody in Blue, the Ontario High School Jazz Band and the Ontario High School Golden Girls.

The tree lighting will be held at 6:30 pm with Mayor Knapp. Announcement of the winner of the Lions Club Coloring Contest will be announced following the lighting.

The event is coordinated by Ontario Community Events, Ontario Local Schools, the City of Ontario and the Ontario Lions Club.

### Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

Alma Fisher, November 14

Ruth Ann Spayde, November 19

JB Spencer, November 20

James Alan Schmidt, November 22

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

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 **RICHLAND COUNTY  
FOUNDATION**

# •Madison Middle School hosts first military appreciation breakfast

(Continued from Front Page)

the student council advisor contributed decorations to enhance the yellow ribbon wall.

The fifth grade cooking club, led by Mary Frey and Wendy Caperton, took on the task of preparing the meal. The club spent several days planning, prepping and cooking to ensure a warm, homemade breakfast would be ready for guests. Custodians prepared the dining and serving areas, and staff members helped decorate the night before to create a welcoming and patriotic atmosphere.

On Friday morning, even more staff stepped in to support the event. Teachers donated military branch signs and a special backdrop for family photos. Mr. Nelson displayed the American flag on the projection screen and televisions throughout the cafeteria, adding to the sense of honor and unity. The head cook worked alongside volunteers to ensure smooth food service, while staff members greeted families, refilled coffee, and attended to every detail to make guests feel appreciated.

A highlight of the morning was a beautifully crafted wooden American flag, donated by Rush Woodworks. Counselor Jessica Rush secured the donation so the school could raffle off the piece as a meaningful gift to one of the attending military families—an extra reminder of the school's deep respect and gratitude.

The Military Appreciation Breakfast was a heartfelt success — filled with moments of connection, gratitude, and community pride. Madison Middle School looks forward to making this an annual tradition and continuing to honor military families for the sacrifice and service they offer both to our nation and to our Madison community.

Madison Middle School extends its sincere thanks to every military member, veteran, and family who joined them for this special breakfast. The staff was honored to celebrate these families and looks forward to continuing this tradition for many years to come.



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Andrew Rush - Owner

419-569-2370 Facebook.com/rushwoodworks





Photos By Traci Little

# ONTARIO COMMUNITY EVENTS Craft Show

**When:** Saturday, December 6th  
**Where:** Richland County Fairgrounds  
**Time:** 8:30 am - 3:00 pm  
**Cost:** \$2 or a new toy (no stuffed animals)

*All proceeds will benefit the Ontario Lions Club and Ontario Community Events. Toys will be donated to the Ontario Police Department.*

# •Madison makes necessary cuts after levy failure

(Continued from Front Page)

from the Ohio State Eagles to be used for the Madison Market Place project.

Various materials were donated from PEL Electric, valued at \$2,500, to be used by the electrical maintenance program. Various pieces of structural steel and sheet steel was donated from PR Machine, valued at \$3,000, to be used by the welding technology and manufacturing technology programs.

Various pieces of structural steel was also donated from Kokosing Construction, valued at \$1,000, to be used by the welding technology and manufacturing technology programs.

The Mifflin PTO donated \$6,515.61 to the principal's account at Mifflin Elementary and a donation of \$500 was accepted from Josh Garrison to be used towards outstanding student lunch debt in the District.

Treasurer Bradd Stevens presented the monthly financial report and the health insurance premium renewal rates were approved as submitted, effective Jan. 1, 2026.

Resignations were accepted from Megan Moysi, assistant varsity track coach, effective Oct. 27; Lori Camillo, preschool intervention specialist, effective May 29 for retirement; Goldie Spencer, middle school science/social studies, effective May 29 for retirement; and James Dillon, high school science, effective June 1 for retirement.

Pupil activity positions approved for the 2025-'26 school year include Angel Ortiz, head seventh grade girls' basketball coach; and Zac Dodd, assistant middle school wrestling coach.

Deborah Scheurer was hired as the Madison Adult Career Center Cosmetology instructor. Sally Travis was hired as evening coordinator and Valarie Davis was hired as career services coordinator.

Substitute teachers hired on an "on call" basis, as needed for the 2025-'26 school year were Kelli Chinn, Christopher Grove, Bailey Hill, Sarah King, Toby Loy, Robyn Minnear, Donald Nunley, Victoria Sloan, Cheyenne Sumler Morgan, Trinity Tucker, Allyson Wigton,

Michael Wolf and Todd Wynn.

Resignations were accepted from Heather Wendland, special education paraprofessional at South; Holly Fair, four-hour cafeteria at Eastview; Sarah Brook, assistant teacher at Madison Early Childhood Learning Center (MECLC); and Susan Aubrey David, assistant teacher for MECLC.

Hirings for the current school year include Cheyenne Sumler Morgan, special education paraprofessional at Mifflin; Michelle Enix, special education paraprofessional, South Preschool; Pam Gerich, 4-hour cook at Eastview; Aryanna Penick, assistant teacher at MECLC; and Joan Blizzard, assistant teacher at MECLC.

Substitute cafeteria employees hired on an "on call" basis, as needed, for the 2025-'26 school year were Kirra Earley and Vanessa Bissel.

An unpaid leave of absence was approved for James Ernsberger, 4-hour cafeteria worker at Madison South Elementary, effective Oct. 27 through Nov. 26, 2025.

A contract between North Central Ohio Educational Service Center and Madison Local Schools to provide intervention specialist services at Mansfield St. Mary's School was approved.

The contract between Madison Local Schools and Mansfield City Schools for the reimbursement of tuition costs for home instruction services received at OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital for the 2025-'26 school year was approved.

The board approved a service agreement between Madison Local Schools and Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center to provide Registered Behavior Technician services for the 2025-'26 school year.

A nomination and appointment were made of a citizen representative for the Complaint Review Committee for the book *Dog Man: Mothering Heights*.

The treasurer was given permission to take the necessary steps for the sale of the former Madison Junior High School property located at the corner of Ashland Rd. and Madison Rd., Mansfield.

The next regular board of education meeting will be held at 6 pm on Dec. 17, in the Madison Middle School Auditoria.

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State Farm County Mutual Insurance Company of Texas, State Farm Lloyds, Richardson, TX

State Farm Florida Insurance Company, Winter Haven, FL

## The Domestic Violence Shelter seeking community input

The Domestic Violence Shelter has launched a county-wide community needs assessment to guide future services and better support survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking in Richland County. For more than four decades, the shelter has provided safety, advocacy and resources for individuals and families in crisis. This new assessment marks an important next step in ensuring programs remain responsive to the community's evolving needs.

"The Domestic Violence Shelter is committed to supporting survivors and creating a safer community," said executive director Colleen Rice. "This needs assessment is a crucial step in shaping our services to reflect the voices of survivors and community members. Your input will help us secure funding and plan strategically for the future. Together, we can make a lasting impact."

The shelter is encouraging residents, survivors, businesses, schools, churches and local organizations to partake in the assessment. The goal is to ensure that voices from across Richland County, including survivors and partner organizations, are heard and incorporated into the shelter's future planning.

The information gathered will guide programming decisions, support grant applications, and in-form strategic initiatives designed to better meet the needs of survivors.

Individuals interested in joining an online or in-person listening session — or in receiving updates about upcoming opportunities — can sign up at <https://thedvshelter.app.neoncrm.com/np/clients/thedvshelter/subscribe.jsp?subscription=11>

Confidentiality and survivor safety will remain a top priority throughout the process. The assessment will be facilitated by Client Experience Group, a firm specializing in community-driven evaluation and service design.

For additional information, contact Colleen Rice at 419-774-5843 ext. 101 or by email: [crice@thedvshelter.com](mailto:crice@thedvshelter.com).

## Lexington Board completes hirings, accepts resignations

Lexington Board of Education met Wednesday, Nov. 19.

The monthly financial report for October 2025 and an invoice from Knox County ESC in the amount of \$5,148.06 for September 2025 Student Learning Center enrollment and services were approved.

Kelli Catanese resigned as Western Elementary IAT chair.

A leave of absence was approved for Stephanie Coffman for approximately twelve weeks, beginning Oct. 23, 2025.

Hirings for the 2025-'26 school year included Jaime Chambers, Sally Hale and Amber Mittner.

Extended school year hours for 2025 summer hours and the 2025-'26 school year were approved with a total of 400 minutes at \$25 per hour.

The "Afterburner" Program will typically run from 2:45 to 4 pm, two days a week with the assistance of NHS students. The goal of the program is to provide academic assistance to students in need.

Tad Davis was approved as high school math club advisor.

Salary adjustments were made for Ashley Strang, Stacy Davis and Rachel Carroll.

Johnneen Gordon resigned as transportation director, effective Jan. 2, 2026.

Chris Bailey and Gregory Kahl were hired as substitute bus drivers and Keneesha Prince was hired as a substitute educational aide at the pre-school. Lynn Ernsberger was hired as a substitute educational aide for the remainder of the 2025-'26 school year.

Coaches approved include Tad Davis, assistant boys basketball coach (1/2 contract); Derrick Shelenberger, assistant boys basketball coach (1/2 contract); Joey Zahn, freshman boys basketball coach; Andrew Hathaway, junior high swim coach; John Murray, junior high wrestling coach; Chuck Malberti, volunteer assistant dive; and Mitch Sellers, weight/strength training (November-January).

Rachel Hoptry was approved as a parent volunteer at Central Elementary.

Logan Beer was approved as a tuition student for the remainder of the 2025-'26 school year. Tuition is waived when the parents move out of the district during the student's senior year, per board policy.

Nancy Schurig was hired as a substitute nurse for the 2025-'26 school year.

The substitute lists were approved as provided by MOESC, dated Nov. 14.

## American Red Cross will offer PAC-MAN items to donors

The American Red Cross encourages donors to give before the end of the year. The last two months of the year can be a challenge for many donors trying to juggle regular donation appointments with packed schedules full of seasonal activities and holiday planning.

The Red Cross is teaming up with Bandai Namco Entertainment America Inc. to celebrate the 45th anniversary of PAC-MAN™. All who come to give blood Nov. 17-Dec. 7, will score an exclusive pair of Red Cross x PAC-MAN socks, while supplies last.

Those who give blood or platelets during the same time frame can snag a custom Red Cross x PAC-MAN GASHAPON®, while they last.

Reserve a spot to give blood or platelets by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, downloading the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or calling 1-800-RED CROSS.

In November, successful donations will get free A1C testing, commonly used to screen for prediabetes and diabetes. (One test result in a 12-month period; do not fast before donating). Visit RedCrossBlood.org/diabetes for more information.

Wednesday, Nov. 26, 9 am to 2 pm, The Ontario Center

Saturday, Nov. 29, 9 am to 2 pm, The Ontario Center

Monday, Dec. 1, noon to 5 pm The Ontario Center

Tuesday, Dec. 2 8:30 am to 1:30 pm, St. Peter's High School, 111 West First St., Mansfield

Wednesday, Dec. 3, noon to 6 pm, The Ontario Center

Thursday, Dec. 4, 8 am to 1 pm, Shelby High School, 1 Whippet Way

Saturday, Dec. 6, 9 am to 2 pm, The Ontario Center



**ASHLEY SCOTT'S** class at Ontario tried four different kinds of bread after reading "Bread Comes to Life" in the Wonders Unit. The class learned that natural resources are used to create new things such as wheat for bread. Students tried wheat rolls, Italian bread, French baguette and oat bread complete with toppings of butter, jelly, Nutella and peanut butter.

## Kiwanis Club of Mansfield launches hats, gloves and socks drive

The Kiwanis Club of Mansfield has partnered with The Richland County Foundation for the Day of Giving, Tuesday Dec. 2. Early giving is already underway.

Donations made to the Kiwanis Club of Mansfield will support the hats, gloves and socks drive to benefit The Friendly House.

To donate visit <https://richlandgives.mightycause.com/organization/Mansfield-Kiwanis-Club>. Donations of hats, gloves and socks may also be made in person at the office of Helen Brown CPA LLC, 685 Logan Rd., Mansfield, OH 44907.

"As the weather starts to get colder, we're noticing children coming out of school to get on the bus without warm hats, gloves and winter socks," said Terry Conard, executive director, Friendly House. "Most of the kids wait 15 minutes or longer in the morning at their bus stop in the cold. We are grateful to The Kiwanis Club of Mansfield for their dedication to helping our kids stay as warm as possible this winter."

Richland Gives is designed to encourage people to contribute to local nonprofits they care about through a single giving website. The Richland County Foundation hosts the day to build capacity, grow philanthropy and make the community stronger.



# Pioneer Career & Technology Center honors 2025 Distinguished Alumni and Business Partner of the Year

By Traci Little

Shelby — Pioneer Career & Technology Center celebrated outstanding partners and alumni last Thursday evening during its annual recognition dinner, honoring individuals and organizations that exemplify excellence in career-technical education.

The event highlighted this year's two major honorees: David "Finn" Finnegan, recipient of the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award, and The Willows at Willard, named 2025 Ralph Phillips Business Partner of the Year.

The program opened with the welcome and Pledge to the Flag led by Pioneer Board of Education President Douglas Theaker, followed by an invocation from Matt Parr, supervisor of satellite programs.

Guests enjoyed a dinner prepared and served by students in Pioneer's Culinary Arts program, a longstanding highlight of the annual celebration.

Clay Frye, Pioneer Director of Operations, recognized special guests before the evening

transitioned into the award presentations.

Pioneer Superintendent Greg Nickoli announced David "Finn" Finnegan as the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. A 1970 graduate of Pioneer's Auto Body and Fender (Collision Repair) program, Finnegan has committed his life to both the collision repair industry and to developing the next generation of skilled technicians.

Finnegan spent nearly two decades as a lead technician at G & M Autobody in Ontario, where he became known for his technical skill and willingness to mentor apprentice technicians. After a successful industry career, he transitioned to teaching, serving at Ohio Hi-Point Career Center, C-TEC of Licking County, and Eastland Career Center. For the past 11 years, he has taught Collision Repair at the Delaware Area Career Center, where he will retire at the end of this school year.

His influence is perhaps best reflected in the words of former student Bryce Murphy,

Class of 2022: "Mr. Finn was more than a teacher. If I ever needed anything, he was there. His favorite saying, 'Make it happen,' still guides me every day."

Finnegan received the award from Superintendent Nickoli, who praised his decades of dedication, leadership, and service to career-technical education.

Superintendent Nickoli also presented the 2025 Ralph Phillips Business Partner of the Year Award to The Willows at Willard, a trusted senior living community providing assisted living, memory care, skilled nursing, and independent living services.

The recognition, inspired by the legacy of Ralph Phillips and Phillips Manufacturing & Tower Company, honors business partners who demonstrate exceptional commitment to student learning, workforce development, and Pioneer's mission.

Assistant Director of Health Services Courtney Hughes, Executive Director Danielle Phillips, and their staff joined Pioneer personnel, past recipients, and community partners to accept the award. Terri Crain, Pioneer Health Assistant Instructor, assisted with the presentation.

Located in Willard, The Willows provides comprehensive resident care supported by amenities such as restaurant-style dining, transportation services, wellness and fitness areas, a salon, game rooms, and engaging social activities. Their compassionate, resident-centered approach has also been translated into exceptional training opportunities for Pioneer students.

In her nomination, Terri Crain emphasized the depth of the relationship between Pioneer and The Willows.

The Willows serves as a clinical training site for high school and adult education certified nursing assistant students, a partner site for the Adult Education Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program and an early job placement site for students in health assistant, medical assisting, medical technologies

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**2025 RALPH PHILLIPS BUSINESS PARTNER OF THE YEAR** — Pioneer Superintendent Greg Nickoli congratulates The Willows at Willard leadership team of Courtney Hughes, director of health services; Danielle Phillips, executive director; and Terri Crain, Pioneer Health Assistant instructor.



**The Willows at Willard staff and Health Assistant Instructor Terri Crain**



**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD WINNER MR. FINN** surrounded by friends, colleagues and a former student who have been part of his career journey.

## •Pioneer CTC honors 2025 Distinguished Alumni and Business Partner of the Year

(Continued from Page 10)

and additional healthcare pathways

Through hands-on mentorship, professional guidance, and real-world training experiences, The Willows helps prepare Pioneer students with the confidence and skills necessary to excel in healthcare careers. Many Pioneer graduates have continued their professional journeys at The Willows — a testament to the supportive environment cultivated by Courtney Hughes and her team.

The evening's program showcased the powerful collaboration between Pioneer Career & Technology Center, its business partners, alumni, and the region's future workforce. The Culinary Arts students' service highlighted Pioneer's commitment to immersive, hands-on education, while the award presentations underscored the importance of partnerships that support student success both inside and beyond the classroom.

Since 1968, Pioneer Career & Technology Center has provided high-quality career-technical education to high school juniors, seniors, and adults across the region. Through innovative programs and strong industry collaborations, Pioneer continues to equip students with the skills they need to thrive in today's workforce.

Learn more at [www.PioneerCTC.edu](http://www.PioneerCTC.edu).



**PIONEER SUPERINTENDENT** Greg Nickoli and Distinguished Alumni honoree David "Finn" Finnegan.

## Senate passes Brenner, Gavarone Bill protecting Ohio's elections

The Ohio State Senate passed Senate Bill 293, sponsored by State Senator Andrew Brenner (R-Delaware) and State Senator Theresa Gavarone (R-Bowling Green), which would require that all mail-in absentee ballots be delivered to the board of elections by close of poll on Election Day and require the Ohio Secretary of States to verify citizenship of voters.

"Unfortunately, laws on the books in Ohio were allowing the integrity of our elections to be questioned," Gavarone said. "By requiring ballots to be received and counted on Election Day and eliminating the possibility for non-citizens, dead and fictitious people, and duplicate registrations to legally be counted in our elections, Ohio has furthered our national reputation as an elections leader."

On March 25, 2025, President Trump signed an executive order instructing the Attorney General of the United States to enforce Title 2, Chapter 1, Section 7 and Title 3, Chapter 1, Section 1 of the U.S. Code against states that violate these provisions by including absentee or mail-in ballots received after Election Day in the final tabulation of votes. Senate Bill 293 would require all mail-in ballots to arrive by poll closing, with the exception of uniformed services and overseas

absentee ballots. Thirty-four other states, both red and blue, require ballots to be in and counted on Election Day.

"I am proud to team up with Senator Gavarone to sponsor this legislation," said Sen. Brenner. "This legislation will ensure that Ohio is abiding by federal election law and President Trump's executive order."

In addition to the absentee ballot requirements, Senate Bill 293 includes other provisions to enhance election integrity. Those include strengthening voter roll accuracy by requiring monthly citizenship checks using BMV and SAVE data, as well as monthly reports to counties on deceased voters. It also requires election workers to challenge anyone flagged as a non-citizen and mandates corrections to any mismatched voter registration data.

"If you're a legal citizen of the State of Ohio we have afforded many opportunities for votes to be cast, including absentee voting, 28 days of early voting, and, of course, in-person Election Day voting," Gavarone said. "But thanks to this bill, Ohioans can be sure that illegal voting is stymied in this state, and that election results will be known promptly and accurately on Election Day."

The bill has been sent to Governor DeWine for final approval.

# Roseto celebrates grand opening with ribbon cutting

Photos and Article By Traci Little

Downtown Mansfield welcomed a vibrant new addition on Friday as community leaders, local officials, and supporters gathered to celebrate the long-awaited ribbon cutting for Roseto, a beautifully renovated event space designed to bring people together and strengthen community bonds.

Hosted by the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development, the celebration began with remarks from President & CEO Ellen Heinz, who expressed excitement for the project's completion after years of planning, vision, and perseverance. As guests introduced themselves, they offered heartfelt words of encouragement, reflecting a shared sense of pride in this new downtown investment.

Chamber Ambassador Doc Stumbo welcomed attendees, followed by Aurelio Diaz, Councilman for Ward 5, who praised Roseto's resilience through multiple challenges, calling the project a "testament of what's happening in our community." Deborah Mount, Councilwoman for Ward 6, and Cheryl Meyer, Councilwoman for Ward 2, both commended the venue as a beautiful and meaningful contribution to Mansfield's revitalization efforts.

Richland County Commissioner Tony Vero highlighted the perfect blend of "a revitalized downtown, a gorgeous space, and Italian food," while Kelly Converse, Finance Director for the City of Mansfield, thanked the owners for bringing such a warm and welcoming venue to the area.

Jennifer Wagner of the Richland Area Chamber also recognized the "blood, sweat, and tears" that went into the renovation. Mayor Jodie Perry echoed that appreciation, applauding owner Shereen for her vision and perseverance through unexpected challenges — including literal flooding — adding that Roseto will be "a fantastic addition" to the city.

## A Vision Rooted in Community

Owner Shereen shared an emotional behind-the-scenes look at the inspiration behind the venue, explaining that Roseto is named after the "Roseto Effect," a phenomenon discovered in the 1950s when researchers found that a small Italian community experienced unusually long, healthy lives — not because of perfect habits, but because of their strong, interconnected relationships. That spirit of connection, she said, is the driving force behind the new space.

"That's really the motivation and inspiration for this building," she said. "The goal is to have all types of events that build bonds here. We want people to gather, connect, and feel welcome."

Roseto is designed to host a wide variety of events—from weddings and parties to festivals, pop-up markets, and community gatherings. Its elegant yet inviting atmosphere is meant to be a place where anyone can feel at home.

During her remarks, Shereen acknowledged several people who played important roles in bringing Roseto to life. She thanked her venue manager, Kiki, whose 20+ years of experience and steady support were invaluable throughout the renovation process. She also expressed gratitude for her partner, Steve, for standing by her

through countless challenges, as well as the many friends, family members, city staff, and Chamber partners who answered "a million questions" along the way.

## A Warm and Welcoming Celebration

Friday's event featured delicious refreshments from Berwick Manor, which showcased four generations of Italian cuisine and hospitality; Char-Bougie, serving a beautiful charcuterie snackin' table; and UR Worthy Catering, which set up a festive and cozy hot cocoa and cider sippin' station.

Following the ribbon cutting, Roseto invited the community to  
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## •Roseto celebrates grand opening with ribbon cutting

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continue the celebration at its open house market event, complete with local vendors, face painting, and additional warming stations.

Roseto can be reached at [info@roseto-events.com](mailto:info@roseto-events.com) or through its Facebook page, Roseto Event Venue.

After photos and closing remarks, the crowd joined in a countdown as Shereen cut the ribbon — officially opening Roseto's doors to the public.

Guests were then invited to sign the ribbon as a keepsake, symbolizing the shared support, teamwork and celebration that brought this downtown dream to life.



## Christmas at Kingwood set to begin

Christmas at Kingwood Center Gardens takes visitors on a festive stroll through the glowing trail of lights and Community Tree Walk.

Inside the 99-year-old Kingwood Hall mansion, guests can see holiday décor winding through every room.

A Display Greenhouse and Garden Gateway include shopping, dining and refreshment options. There are also festive displays in Roost Hall and the Carriage House.

Special events will include photos with Santa on Dec. 6 and 7, from 4–8 pm; Ashland Model Railroaders and Railfans Train Display Dec. 11–14, from 3–9 pm; a reindeer visit on Dec. 18 and 19, from 5–8 pm; and the St. Peter's Handbell Choir on Dec. 19, from 4–6 pm.

All guests, including Kingwood members and children of all ages, must reserve timed entry tickets online or by phone.

Admission is \$10 for non-members ages 19+, \$5 for ages 7–18 and free for children six and under.

Complimentary admission is included as a membership benefit for members only if timed entry ticket reservation is made. Members and non-members who do not reserve timed entry tickets in advance will be subject to walk-up ticket prices.

When selecting a timed entry ticket, choose a half-hour arrival window during which you must arrive. For example, a 6 pm ticket allows for arrival between 6 and 6:30 pm. Please allow ample time for parking and check-in at the welcome desk. Entry outside of the reserved window may be delayed or denied based on ticket availability. Timed entry ticket allows for a better guest experience and parking availability.

Departure times are not scheduled, so everyone is welcome to explore the display at their own pace once checked in.

If needed, timed entry ticket may be rescheduled, based on availability. For assistance call 419-522-0211. Christmas at Kingwood is an all-weather event with no refunds.

Walk-up tickets are limited and may be available on a first-come, first-served basis each night. Pricing is \$12 for ages 19+, \$7 for ages 7–18 and free for children six and under.

Tickets are available at [kingwoodcenter.org/christmas-at-kingwood/](http://kingwoodcenter.org/christmas-at-kingwood/).

## Items being collected for toy drive

Springfield Township Fire Department is once again teaming up with The Ontario Center and Ontario Community Events, Menards, and Dollar General for the Giving Ontario Toy Drive.

New, unwrapped toys, teen gifts and gift cards are being collected until Dec. 18.

Donations can be dropped off at Fire Station #1, 3700 Park Avenue West, Ontario; and Fire Station #2, 400 S. Lexington-Springmill Rd., Ontario.

## Targeted cancer drug now available for FGFR-mutated pancreatic cancer

A promising new targeted cancer therapy is now available to certain patients with advanced pancreatic cancer — from the comfort of their home. The treatment is available through a first-of-its-kind, entirely telehealth-based targeted cancer drug therapy nationwide clinical trial led by The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center — Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute (OSUCCC — James).

Up to 40 adults with advanced or metastatic pancreatic cancer will be enrolled in this phase II study. The study will test how well the smart drug, pemigatinib (pronounced pem-i-gat-in-ib, marketed as Pemazyre) works for the treatment of adult patients with advanced or metastatic pancreatic cancer with specific mutations in the fibroblast growth factor receptor (FGFR) gene. The drug is currently Food and Drug Administration approved for the treatment of bile duct cancers and is being evaluated for FGFR-mutated pancreatic cancer in this clinical trial.

“Traveling for specialized cancer treatment is often cost-prohibitive for patients experiencing cancer — particularly for rare but aggressive types like pancreatic cancer. Telemedicine enabled clinical trials can offer novel cutting-edge targeted treatments with nationwide reach,” said Sameek Roychowdhury, MD, PhD, a medical oncologist with the OSUCCC — James and principal investigator of the new study.

Roychowdhury explains that so-called “smart drugs” open a new world of personalized treatment options for patients with cancer. These targeted therapies are “smart” because they target only the genetic mutations contributing to cancer cell growth, delivering genomic-guided, precise treatment for each person’s disease characteristics. In this case, the mutation is in the FGFR gene, which is present in roughly 1.5% of pancreatic cancer patients.

Pancreatic cancer is a rare but often aggressive form of cancer that is diagnosed in about 64,000 people each year. The disease is slightly more common in men and often diagnosed in later, less treatable stages because its symptoms usually occur after it has spread to other parts of the body. While surgery can be curative in the earliest stages of the disease, it is rarely detected before it has spread, and approved treatment options are limited. This, said Roychowdhury, is why expanding access to targeted drug therapy through nationwide telemedicine-enabled clinical trials is so critical.

“There may be hundreds of gene mutations in someone’s cancer. Discovering which ones are driving how the cancer behaves and treating the mutation with novel therapies is the basis of ‘smart drug’ — or precision cancer medicine — research,” said Roychowdhury, who is also a physician scientist with the OSUCCC — James Translational Therapeutics Program. “One of the major barriers for precision oncology clinical trials is the rarity of some gene mutations or disease, which limits pharmaceutical company interest and feasibility.”

## HEAP assistance available

The Ohio Department of Development and the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. has announced that assistance is available to help with home energy bills. The Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) helps Ohioans at or below 175% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines for a household of up to eight members and 60% of State Median Income for a household of nine or more members to pay their heating bills.

The benefit is applied directly to the customer’s utility or bulk fuel bill. Older Ohioans may go to their local Area Agency on Aging office for help with assembling the required documents and completing the application or visit [www.energyhelp.ohio.gov](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov) to apply online or to download a copy of the application.

Applications must be received by May 31, 2026. For information call 419-524-4144.

When applying, individuals need to have copies of most recent utility bills, a list of all household members (including birth dates and Social Security numbers, proof of income for the past 30 days for all household members (12 months for certain income types), proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency for all household members and proof of disability (if applicable). HEAP benefits are applied to energy bills after Jan. 1.

The rise of telemedicine during and after the pandemic represents a silver lining that Roychowdhury says will help overcome barriers to access for therapeutic clinical trials in oncology.

This new telehealth study will give patients from across the United States access to oral targeted drug therapies without having to travel to a different city. Study participants will have research management with Roychowdhury via telehealth, delivered in partnership with their local oncologists for standard-of-care follow up. The study has been developed in partnership with Roychowdhury’s mentee, Zachary Risch, MD, who serves as an assistant professor of medical oncology.

“Our team’s goal is to develop a network of telemedicine clinical trials that we can offer with nationwide reach. This is a game changer for cancer clinical trials, and more importantly, for patients,” said Roychowdhury, who has more than 10 years of experience with FGFR smart drugs. “We are bringing the trial to the patient, instead of the patient coming to the trial.”

The preliminary research on FGFR that helped launch this treatment concept was supported by Gateway for Cancer Research, a nonprofit organization dedicated to exclusively funding early phase clinical trials for all types of cancer. The new clinical trial includes partnerships with Incyte Pharmaceuticals, the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, Foundation Medicine Inc., Tempus, and Caris Life Sciences. The team is also collaborating with community oncology practices including American Oncology Network, US Oncology, Veterans Affairs Administration, and more to come.

“By taking clinical trial treatment options directly to the patient and partnering with community oncologists across the United States, we greatly expand access to patients who need these therapies,” Roychowdhury said. “Being a rare cancer is no longer a barrier for drug development.”

In addition to the clinical trial, Roychowdhury’s team has created a registry for patients to join and support research on rare types of pancreas cancer. To learn more about participating in this study or the registry, call 1-800-293-5066. To learn more about gastrointestinal treatment and research visit [cancer.osu.edu](http://cancer.osu.edu).

## Chamber Small Business of the Year Committee narrows candidates, invites public to attend awards ceremony

The Board of Directors and Small Business of the Year Committee of the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development will soon honor and celebrate all small businesses and name their 2025 Small Business of the Year Recipients. The event will be held on Dec. 9 from 11:30 am to 1:30 pm at the Kehoe Center. Each Finalist will be featured in a short video highlighting their business, sponsored by Mechanics Bank.

Presented by Medical Mutual, the awards will be given to the Small Business of the Year with 15 and more employees and 14 and fewer employees, along with large and small non-profit organizations.

Attendees are asked to register by Dec. 2 by calling the Richland Area Chamber at 419-522-3211, or registering online at <https://portal.richlandareachamber.com/events/details/small-business-of-the-year-awards-celebration-2025-6187>

Finalists in the 14 and fewer employee category are Hercules Car Wash, McCready Interiors/Norwalk — The Furniture Idea, Olive & Oak. The 15+ employee category finalists are Cline Fire, Pinnacle Advisors and Pinnacle Building Services.

The large non-profit winner, Ohio Bird Sanctuary, and the small non-profit winner, Ultimate Veterans Adventures, have already been announced and will receive their awards during the presentation.

The non-profit semifinalists include Aspire, Ignited, Richland County Land Bank, Mid-Ohio Guardianship, NAMI, Noon Optimists, Raemelon Therapeutic Equestrian Center, Richland Carrousel Park, and Rosi C Ranch.

For-profit semifinalists include Bloom & Fizz, Deca Manufacturing, Eberts Heating & Cooling, Global Medical Foam, Helen Brown CPA, MHS Industrial Supply, Miller’s Jewelry, Monarch Surfaces, Skelton’s, Spyder Signs, Thomas Electric and Weiss Industries.

# Local family shares foster care journey

Five years ago, Carolyn, Michael and their two children, residents of Richland County, felt God's tug on their heart to foster. Yet, due to life circumstances and a myriad of questions, they were not yet ready to take that first step.

Three years later, that quiet nudge became a clear calling. "We felt led by the Holy Spirit to foster," Carolyn says. "We reached out to Encourage Foster Care, and this time, we were ready to say yes."

That leap of faith marked the beginning of their journey with Encourage Foster Care, a private, non-profit, Christian foster care agency that has become both a lifeline and a family to Carolyn and Michael. "In March 2026, it will be three years since we started fostering," Carolyn says. "We've had two kiddos during that time."

For Carolyn and Michael, choosing Encourage wasn't a coincidence — it was a calling. "From the start, I wanted a Christian agency," Carolyn explains. "After a lot of researching, Encourage really stood out. I could see the passion in their employees, and after talking to them, I truly believed we would be supported."

That belief has been proven right time and time again. Carolyn describes how her coordinator has been a constant source of help, especially during difficult moments. "I don't know where I'd be without her. When kiddos have meltdowns late at night, she's there. It's amazing to have a team that not only supports you but also prays for you."

From education sessions with their Encourage Trainer, who "always knows exactly what's needed," to the dedicated assessors and respite coordinators, Carolyn says the team at Encourage provides comprehensive care that makes the difference. "There are a lot of moving pieces in foster care," she reflects, "but there's also a lot of help and heart at Encourage."

Fostering, Carolyn admits, isn't easy — it's transformative. "It's a rollercoaster," she says with honesty. "You become very aware of your own trauma and triggers. These kids will find those buttons, and you have to learn to self-correct so you can help them heal."

Faith has been central to that growth. "I need God's help for my own thoughts, behaviors, and actions," she says. "If I'm unregulated, I can't help the child be regulated."

One of Carolyn's most memorable experiences came with their first placement, a five-year-old boy who had never prayed before. "When he came to us, he was angry and used to hearing and saying things no child should," she remembers. "We would pray before meals, and at first, he wanted nothing to do with it."

But something changed over the next three months. "When it was time for him to move to kinship care, he asked me, 'What if they don't pray before dinner?' I told him, 'Then you can teach them how.' That moment will always stay with me. It showed me how much can change in such a short time when love and faith are at the center."

Carolyn and her husband have learned that fostering requires both courage and discernment. "It's okay to say no," she advises. "In the beginning, we made a list of what wouldn't work for our family. You can't take on more than you're called to."

She believes everyone has a role to play in supporting foster care, even if they don't open their homes. "Not everyone is meant to foster," she says. "But everyone can help. When our foster child came to us, let's call him Quinn, he had nothing. Within days, our church brought us boxes of clothes and toys. That kind of community support makes all the difference."

Quinn's arrival was unexpected — an emergency placement that needed to happen that day. Carolyn recalls the uncertainty she felt that day. "I was so nervous. You don't know what you're walking into, and I wasn't sure if we were ready to say yes to this child. But then my daughter asked, 'Why wouldn't we foster him?' And I believe God was speaking through her." Carolyn and Michael said yes, and Quinn came to live with them 2 short hours later.

The transformation since that day has been remarkable. "When Quinn came, he was an empty shell. Now, he's alive," said Carolyn. Carolyn and Michael are currently moving toward adopting Quinn, though his biological parents are appealing the case. "Of course, we want him to be officially part of our family," Carolyn shares, "but we also acknowledge his parents' rights."

Every night, the family prays for Quinn's parents and siblings.

"We want him to have a relationship with them if it's safe and possible," she says. "It's hard not to feel resentful, but that's God's place to sort out. At the end of the day, if he goes home and God redeems their story, that's a beautiful thing too."

To anyone thinking about fostering, Carolyn offers heartfelt advice: "Pray about it. Don't sugarcoat it. You'll mess up, and that's okay. God gives you grace, and you try again."

Carolyn shared how life-changing it is to have a friend who has also fostered and under-stands the emotional ups and downs of the foster care journey. She is looking forward to the January Foster Parent Pre-Service in Mansfield, she is hopeful this will increase the network of Encourage foster parents in Richland County.

She smiles as she reflects on their journey: "No matter what you do to help, it's God's work. Foster care isn't easy, but we are so blessed that God chose us to foster."

Foster Parent Pre-Service is a 24-hour trauma-focused training course to prepare foster par-ents with the tools and resources they need to open their hearts and homes. The next Encourage 24-hour Pre-Service will be held Jan. 17, 18, 24 and 25 at Crossroads Church, 1188 Park Avenue West Mansfield.

To learn more visit [encouragefostercare.org](http://encouragefostercare.org).

## BrandRichland launches county-wide community calendar Powered by Yodel

Destination Mansfield – Richland County and the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development have launched the countywide Community Calendar at [BrandRichland.com/Events](http://BrandRichland.com/Events), a single, trusted source for public events across Richland County. Conceptualized in the 2019 Mansfield Rising plan and delivered through the BrandRichland initiative, the calendar makes it easier for residents and visitors to discover what's happening across the county.

"It is as if Yodel read the Mansfield Rising Plan, which was created in 2019. The plan said a healthy and bustling downtown begins with awareness. With the Yodel software, the community will be able to easily coordinate and promote events downtown and throughout the county," said Allie Watson, Richland County Foundation President & CEO.

Funding support from Destination Mansfield - Richland County made the Yodel deployment possible, and DRM Productions integrated the feature into the BrandRichland website. "Along with Branding, we identified establishing a community-wide calendar as one of the core Mansfield Rising projects we would to bring to life," according to Lee Tasseff, Destination Mansfield-Richland County President. "Yodel's AI platform has the potential to live up to the ideal of what a true community calendar can be. The decision to acquire it was a fulfillment of that promise we were happy to make!"

How it works. Yodel's AI technology gathers event information from trusted organizations' websites and Facebook event pages, standardizing key details, such as event type, date, location, and organizer/ticket links, into a single searchable calendar. Organizers continue posting events on their own pages; the calendar follows those updates.

Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development President & CEO mentioned, "We are grateful for support from area public, private, and non-profit partners to amplify our regional messaging to internal and external markets in BrandRichland, and with this tool, help better connect our community to the great events going on. We are excited to get this underway!"

As this tool rolls out, we encourage community feedback to help us optimize the experience and ensure the calendar serves residents, visitors, and event organizers effectively.

Browse events at [BrandRichland.com/Events](http://BrandRichland.com/Events). A mobile option is available via the Yodel app <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/yodel-community-connections/id6461458846>. On Google Play search "Yodel Event Calendar"

BrandRichland is a county-wide branding and storytelling initiative conceptualized in the 2019 Mansfield Rising plan, co-led by Destination Mansfield – Richland County and the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development.

# University Hospitals ranks 25 on Dream Employers List

University Hospitals was ranked No. 25 by Forbes in the magazine's second-annual America's Dream Employers ranking. UH is ranked highest in the healthcare & social services category in Ohio and the only employer in the state among the Top 25.

Only 500 employers across the country made the list.

Employers on America's Dream Employers 2026 list are turning dreams into reality for their workers by offering generous compensation, mission-driven initiatives, challenging assignments and benefits that promote mental wellbeing and flexible schedules, according to Forbes.

"It's an honor for University Hospitals to be recognized once again as one of America's Dream Employers by Forbes, employees and college students who aspire to become part of our workforce," said Cliff A. Megerian, MD, FACS, UH Chief Executive Officer, and Jane and Henry Meyer Chief Executive Officer Distinguished Chair. "Our more than 33,000 caregivers pride themselves on caring for our community and share in our speak up culture. We're an organization that val-

ues input from our entire workforce, regardless of title, which helps drive outstanding patient care. We are committed to creating a sense of belonging for our employees so that we can retain top talent and recruit new talent to our health system."

To create list, Forbes partnered with market research firm Statista to survey 10,000 college students in the United States and 140,000 U.S.-based employees at companies across all sectors that employ a minimum of 1,000 people in the country. Students were asked which employers they considered to be dream employers and to rate how excited they would be to receive an offer from the company. They were also asked how appealing the employer was based on growth opportunities, quality of work, salary and company reputation.

Employee respondents were asked about their dream employers in addition to whether they would recommend their current employer or previous employer (within the past two years). Employees were also asked to evaluate their companies based on certain criteria: wages, health benefits, professional development, working conditions and the ability of employees to express ideas.

Responses were analyzed, and more than 266,000 data points were considered to give each employer a score. The 500 companies with the highest scores made the list.

UH has a robust employee recognition program in which leaders and team members can nominate those who go above and beyond to drive our mission, vision and values.

As Northeast Ohio's hometown healthcare team and the third-largest healthcare employer in the state, UH works to engage local students early on about career opportunities through youth programs and training camps, so students can learn about the variety of career options in the medical field.

The full list of Dream Employers can be found at <https://www.forbes.com/lists/americas-dream-employers/>

## Columbia Gas gives safety tips during Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month

November is National Carbon Monoxide Awareness Month and Columbia Gas of Ohio would like to remind customers to take precautions to protect themselves, their families and their homes from carbon monoxide (CO) leaks.

CO leaks are sometimes associated with gas leaks, but they are not the same. CO is produced when fuels like gasoline, wood, natural gas, propane, or oil burn incompletely. CO leaks can occur if a natural gas appliance malfunctions, so it is crucial to have a professional routinely perform safety and maintenance checks.

CO is odorless, tasteless and non-corrosive, so take extra precautions to stay safe from this "silent killer."

- Install CO detectors throughout your home: Like smoke detectors, CO detectors play a critical role in home safety. Install a CO detector on every floor of your home and in every room where someone sleeps. Remember to test your CO detectors regularly.

- Know CO poisoning symptoms: The symptoms of CO poisoning can look like symptoms of the flu and may include headaches, dizziness, nausea, vomiting and irregular breathing. A warning sign is if you or a family member feels tired at home, but fine when you leave.

- Don't ignore the warning signs: At high concentrations, CO can be fatal within five minutes. If you or a family member doesn't feel well and you suspect CO poisoning, take the concern seriously.

You can implement measures and practices to lower the risk of CO exposure and leaks in your home. Build the following habits into your home emergency action plan and annual routine:

- Have fuel-burning appliances like your furnace inspected regularly by a qualified technician, especially at the start of every winter heating season. A qualified technician can ensure your appliances are functioning safely, but they can also check that the appliances are using energy efficiently, potentially saving you money on your energy bill.

- Find and utilize qualified contractors. You can find a qualified contractor on our Columbia Gas Trade Allies page.

- Check vents and chimneys regularly and clear them of any debris or other blockages.

- Use space heaters safely and only in accordance with manufacturer guidelines.

- Only heat your home using appliances made for that purpose. Never use a stove or oven to heat your home.

- Make sure everyone in your home knows what to do if you detect a CO leak. If you believe you have a CO leak, leave the area to get fresh air, call 911 and DO NOT GO BACK until re-pairs are made and it is safe to reenter your home.

Your safety and the safety of your family is critically important. If you believe you are smelling the rotten egg odor of natural gas, stop what you are doing, leave the area, and call 911 and Columbia Gas from a safe distance at 1-800-344-4077.

Learn more about carbon monoxide and find more safety tips at [ColumbiaGasOhio.com/CO](http://ColumbiaGasOhio.com/CO).



Ontario Police Dispatcher Ian Metcalf has been recognized as the 2025 Dispatcher of the Year by the Ohio Public Safety Telecommunications Gold Star Awards. He received this honor on Sept. 10, in Columbus.

## BBB® pet scams update: popular dog breeds mean popular targets

French bulldogs, dachshunds, German shepherds: These breeds are some of the most popular lures that scammers use to bring in unsuspecting targets. And it can be hard to tell the difference between real advertisements and fake ones.

Reports to BBB show thousands of fake websites and social media pages for pet scams, including many where scammers have stolen a legitimate business' identity to fool potential buyers. Median losses top several hundred dollars from fraudsters lying to empathetic buyers about animals being hurt if they don't hand over more money.

BBB examines patterns of reports, reviews the amount of money lost and shares stories from those caught up in the scams so consumers can avoid them.

Scam Tracker reports for pet scams have decreased over the last two years, but remain an issue. Scammers come from all over the world, mainly targeting U.S. citizens.

Businesses can protect themselves against most of these scams with proper training and education. Fraudulent websites can appear at the top of search results, confusing buyers.

An Akron woman shared that she tried to purchase a puppy online for an agreed price of \$410, including delivery. After paying, she was told a delivery company would reach out. Instead, "Reliant Way Carrier" contacted her asking for an additional \$399 for a vet check and vaccines required for transport. She paid — only to be told next that she needed to purchase a special crate for \$499, which they claimed would be refunded. After sending that, she was informed she needed to pay \$999 for state-required insurance before the puppy could be shipped.

Each time, she was promised a refund and each time she paid. The requests for money kept coming, but no puppy ever arrived, and she never received a single dollar back.

A Mansfield resident reported a similar experience. She selected a puppy for \$500, plus a \$150 shipping fee, and was instructed to pay through PayPal using the "friends and family" option. On the scheduled delivery day, she was told she needed to send another \$680 for "pet flight insurance," with \$650 supposedly refundable once the puppy arrived. She paid again through PayPal to two different individuals. The puppy was originally supposed to land at 5:45 pm, but shortly before, she was told the flight was delayed due to the insurance payment. The next update didn't come until 1:08 am, stating the puppy was delayed in Tennessee — after which all communication stopped. She never received the puppy or any refunds.

Red flags of a pet scam include popular breeds available for incredibly low prices, a seller that refuses to meet in person or take a video call, extra charges for cages, vaccinations and other shipping costs, the word "teacup" used in an advertisement and high-pressure tactics meant to make the buyer think the animal will be harmed.

The BBB has tips to avoid pet scams.

- See pets in person. Most scams are not sophisticated enough to fake out an in-person meeting. Video calls can also be a strong deterrent against fraud in nearly all cases.

- Use reverse image search. Many scam websites are impersonations of real businesses. Search the photos used online or sent to you to see if they appear anywhere else online.

- Understand market prices. Many pet scams offer animals at deep discounts. Knowing what an animal should cost can help raise alarm bells if a price is suspiciously low.

- Check out your local shelter. Many buyers have no preference for breeds. If not, an in-person visit to a local shelter can be a surefire way to avoid scams.

Visit [BBB.org](http://BBB.org) to check out a business or register a complaint and use the BBB Scam TrackerSM to report a scam.



ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL had a full slate of spirited activities that brought excitement, generosity and plenty of laughter to the campus last week. Students kicked-off the day by celebrating the success of our schoolwide coin drive, which raised over \$1,500 for Warrior Wishmaker, a fund dedicated to supporting OHS students in need. Mrs. Ferguson's class topped the charts and earned this year's prize. Warrior Leadership purchased a new speaker to bring some extra energy to Friday Fun. Students enjoyed a mix of music and even some lunchtime karaoke, filling the cafeteria with singing and cheering. The fun continued as students gathered to watch the highly anticipated teacher sliming, featuring Mr. Mergel, who took it all in stride for a great cause. It all wrapped-up with the annual "Volleybros" showdown. The senior team claimed victory in the student competition, but the celebration was short-lived as they were defeated by the faculty team in the final match.

## Holiday Pops tradition returns

The Renaissance Performing Arts Association will present the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra's Holiday Pops, on Saturday, Dec. 20, at 7:30 pm at the Renaissance Theatre.

Conducted by Octavio Más-Arocas, this festive concert brings the warmth and magic of the season to life with a vibrant blend of timeless carols, contemporary holiday tunes and new favorites.

"Holiday Pops has become a treasured tradition for families across our community," said Chelsie Thompson, President & CEO of the Renaissance Performing Arts Association. "It's a joyful celebration of music, family, and togetherness — something we all look forward to every year."

Seating is limited. For tickets visit <https://www.eventticketscenter.com/holiday-pops-mansfield-tickets/1212338/e>



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## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

**CLEAR FORK VS MADISON VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · NOV. 21**  
**LADY COLTS WIN 66-44 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER**



## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

CLEAR FORK VS MADISON JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL · NOV. 21  
LADY COLTS WIN 48-21 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER



## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

# Shelby Whippets claim regional championship 41-7 against familiar foe Galion Tigers

By Kris Leiter

Arlyn Field was the battlefield last Friday, where Shelby handily defeated the Galion Tigers 41-7 and claimed the Regional Crown in Division IV.

The score 41-7 seems simple enough and you may presume it was a simple blow-out — but was it?

You may wonder if Galion was caught off guard, but simply put, No. Head Coach Matt Dick knew much more about Shelby than the typical opponent. There was a possible week four redemption in mind. They came to play, and that they did.

Hats off to Galion and Coach Matt Dick and his amazing staff for playing a great game. They respected the Whippets and knew it would be no easy task to contain them.

When I spoke to Coach Dick last week he said, “We are going to try to keep Devito guessing,” referring to stopping Shelby’s quarterback Brayden Devito.

And that they did. Check that box.

On Shelby’s side of the line of scrimmage were a few good men including Air Force commit quarterback and offensive line Brayden Devito and Brady Bowman.

Devito has been compared to the likes of Joe Burrows, yes, THAT guy — the NFL Cincinnati phenom. So, Devito is just four touchdowns shy of notching 200 TD’s for the record books in the State of Ohio! Devito is ringing in with just over 16,000 yards of airing out the pigskin out via air-mail.

As with any quarterback, there is usually talented personnel on the other end of the line. Enter Brady Bowman.

His résumé speaks for itself with 70 catches, over 1,400 yards and 21 trips to the end zone — one of the best in the State of Ohio. Not bad.

Galion’s defense did such an amazing job, that Shelby was caught off-guard many times — so much in fact, that the Whippets led the stat column in a statistic that you don’t want to hang your hat on in a football game: leading in penalty yards. They had Shelby racking up over 100 yards in penalties alone!

At one point during the game, Galion had Shelby so bewildered that they had a fourth down and 23 yards for a first down! That is not a typo!

Most of the time, when a team leads the category in penalties, they are not the victors.

Galion kept Shelby’s front line on their toes, literally.

Galion Coach Matt Dick said in a recent interview, “We are going to try to keep our offense on the field as much as possible and make things unpredictable.”

That they did and both teams gave us a great game!

This Friday won’t get any easier for Shelby as they move on in the post-season play. Shelby will advance this Friday to tangle with Cincinnati Indian Hills in the state semi-finals at Sidney Memorial Stadium, 7 pm kick-off.

Indian Hills, located approximately 25 northeast of Cincinnati, rings in with a “clean bill of health.” Their stats show 13-0 with five shutouts on the season, during the last six weeks of the regular season. They had four games of holding their opponent to 7 points and three games of holding their opponent to 14 points.

Indian Hills never allowed an opponent to score more than 19 points, (one game) and this is their first time in the state-semis finals. They had seven games scoring more than 40 points and have had 17 post-season appearances.

Shelby is also 13-0 and had four shutouts this season. They had eight games of holding opponent to 14 points, 11 games scoring more than 40 points, 12 post-season appearances and are two-time state-semi-finalists (2017, 2025).

Indian Hills brings to the table senior quarterback Devian Daniels.

Daniels is no stranger to the pigskin party or the baseball diamond. Scholarship offers for both baseball and football have been the norm in his mailbox. Daniels has verbally decided to land his feet next year at Mississippi State for baseball.

During the 2025 season, he can hang his hat on 800 yards and 12 touchdowns, as well as putting his feet in motion by rushing over 600 yards and 13 touchdowns.

When you have a football résumé like that, colleges will come knocking on your door. The University of Cincinnati, Northwestern and Miami had expressed interest.

It may sound like a cliché, but this will be a game to see! Good luck to Shelby!



**THE KINDNESS CLUB** visited a local nursing home to celebrate Thanksgiving and make turkey crafts. Residents’ faces lit up when the fifth graders walk through the doors.

# 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 November 19, 2025.

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

**ORDINANCE NO. 25-26 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN A DEED ON BEHALF OF THE CITY TO DONATE REAL ESTATE TO THE ONTARIO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION THAT IS UNNEEDED AND HOLDS NO ECONOMIC VALUE TO THE CITY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Cathy VanAuer  
Clerk of Council  
City of Ontario, OH  
(T-C 11-27, 12-4 '25) 24L

## CITY OF ONTARIO GENERAL LABORER POSITION

The City of Ontario, an Equal Opportunity Employer, currently has an opening for a General Laborer in the Service Department. The current opening is in the Streets Department, the test will also be used for future openings in the Water, Sewer, Parks and Maintenance Departments.

A valid driver's license is required. Please visit [ontarioohio.org](http://ontarioohio.org) for a full job description. We offer an excellent benefits package.

Applications are available at the Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, or online at [www.ontarioohio.org](http://www.ontarioohio.org) and must be returned by noon on December 10, 2025. Applications may be returned by email to [civilservice@ontarioohio.org](mailto:civilservice@ontarioohio.org) or in a sealed envelope addressed to the Civil Service Commission-General Laborer Position. The Civil Service exam will be held Sunday, December 14, 2025, 9:00 a.m., doors open at 8:30

a.m., at the Ontario Municipal Building Community Room, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, 44906.

The City of Ontario is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on any basis prohibited by law including military status. However, if you are applying for a civil service examination and elect to claim military service credit either as an honorably discharged veteran or as a member of the National Guard or a Reserve component as provided in R.C. 124.23, then please attach a copy of your honorable discharge from active duty, DD 214 or other proof of eligibility for this credit.

Cathy VanAuer  
Clerk of Council  
City of Ontario, OH  
(T-C 11-20, 27, '25) 46L

## ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

Sealed bids for Gasoline and Diesel Fuel for January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026 will be opened at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 2nd, 2025 by Adam Gongwer, Service-Safety Director of the City of Ontario.

Specifications may be obtained electronically from the Service-Safety Director. Email a request to [servicesafetydirector@ontarioohio.org](mailto:servicesafetydirector@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: 2026 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).

The City of Ontario reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Check or Bond on rejected bids will be returned promptly, and on accepted bids, the same will be retained until the contracts are consummated.

Adam Gongwer  
Service-Safety Director  
City of Ontario, OH  
(T-C 11-20, 27, '25) 31L



**ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL'S** Science Club explored innovative solutions to environmental challenges during its latest meeting. Students investigated how ferrofluids — often called “liquid magnets” — paired with powerful neodymium magnets can help remove microplastics from waterways. Through hands-on experimentation, members gained insight into emerging technologies that could one day contribute to cleaner, healthier ecosystems.

## RCT will offer free bus rides

Richland County Transit (RCT) is spreading holiday cheer by offering free special holiday service to thank riders and the community for supporting public transit throughout the year.

Fixed route bus rides are free for everyone and Dial-A-Ride service is free for eligible riders.

Special Saturday service (when RCT doesn't usually run) will be offered on Saturday, Dec. 13, from 9:30 am to 4 pm.

Fare-Free Fridays will be offered during regular hours (6:30 am to 6:30 pm) on Black Friday, Nov. 28 and Friday, Dec. 19.

RCT will be closed all day for Thanksgiving (Nov. 27), Christmas (Dec. 25) and New Year's Day (Jan. 1). RCT will end service at 4 pm on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24).

### The schedule on Dec. 13 will be:

Transit 1, Park Avenue, 9:30-3:30, last bus at 2:30  
Transit 2, Lexington Avenue, 9:30-4:00, last bus at 3:30  
Transit 3, South Main, 9:30-3:30, last bus at 2:30  
Transit 5, Springmill, 9:30-4:00, last bus at 3:30  
Transit 7, Ashland Rd., 10:00-3:30, last bus at 3:00  
Transit 8, Glessner 10:00-3:30, last bus at 3:00  
Transit 9, W Fourth St 10:00-4:00, last bus at 3:00

Route 16, Christmas Circular (Leaves Walmart on the hour with the first bus at 10:00. Leaves Meijer on the half hour last bus at 3:25).

DAR available from 9:30-4:00, last scheduled pick-up time 3:15 pm. Call 419-522-4504 to schedule.

## Mansfield Symphony Youth Orchestra will present holiday prelude Dec. 14

The Renaissance Performing Arts Association invites the community to celebrate the season with the Mansfield Symphony Youth Orchestra (MSYO) in their annual Holiday Prelude concert on Sunday, Dec. 14, at 3:30 pm at the Renaissance Theatre.

Under the direction of Stephen Domka, these gifted student musicians from a twelve-county region will perform joyful new arrangements of holiday favorites alongside beloved orchestral classics. From timeless melodies to spirited surprises, the program showcases the passion, dedication, and artistry of North Central Ohio's next generation of performers.

The Mansfield Symphony Youth Orchestra is composed of approximately 90 of the region's finest high school musicians, representing a twelve-county area.

## BUSINESS DIRECTORY

**First Federal  
Bank of Ohio**

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**Lisa Anderson**  
NMLS 618735

Branch Manager - Loan Officer