



# TRIBUNE-COURIER

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

news@tribune-courier.com

06.19.25



Photo By Traci Little

## MACC hosts graduation

Madison Adult Career Center (MACC) held its annual graduation for students completing Career Development Programs during the 2024-'25 school year on Friday, June 13.

MACC holds its annual graduation ceremony to recognize students upon successful completion of their training programs. Seven graduates were nominated by their instructor(s) for Student of the Year: Erica Bose, Dental Assisting; Jaime Ferguson, Industrial Electrical Maintenance; Michelle Morrison, Nail Technician; John Neron, Welding Technology; Sarah Riley, Medical Assisting Technologies; Emma Ross, Phlebotomy/EKG; and Sherina Speicher, Medical Assisting Technologies. John Neron and Sarah Riley were selected as Co-Students of the Year for the 2024-'25 school year.

Students graduated from career development programs including Advanced Cosmetology, Dental Assisting, Industrial Electrical Maintenance, Medical Assisting Technologies, Precision Machining/CNC Technology, Phlebotomy/EKG, State Tested/Certified Nurse Aide, and Welding Technology. Students also graduated from the following certificate programs: Construction & Welding Fundamentals, Customer & Office Support Technology, Gas Metal Arc Welding, and Nail Technician. Programs range from 96 to 1,800 clock hours of training.

Graduates earn or soon will earn industry-recognized certifications, such as Registered Phlebotomy Technician (RPT); Registered Medical Assistant (RMA); Registered Dental Assistant (AMT); Dental Radiography certification; Ohio State Cosmetology and Barber Board Licensure; State Tested/Certified Nurse Aide (STNA/CNA); American Welding Society (AWS); The National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER); OPAC certification in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook; NRF Customer Service & Sales; Nail Technician Licensure; and Basic Life Support (BLS) and HeartSaver First Aid certifications. All graduates of Career Development programs also earn an ACT WorkKeys National Career Readiness Credential (NCRC).

Madison Adult Career Center graduated a total of 124 adult students this school year with 101 graduating from Career Development programs, 23 graduating from certificate programs and 42 also earning their adult diploma. Students graduating from Career Development programs who successfully meet graduation requirements receive a Certificate of Completion and a Career Passport in addition to their industry credentials.

(Continued on Page 29)

## Annual parade kicks-off Miss Ohio Week events

Photos and Article By Traci Little

Miss Ohio Week is officially underway in Mansfield, and the excitement began in style this past Sunday, June 15, with the annual Miss Ohio Parade through downtown. Crowds lined the streets to cheer on the 2025 Miss and Teen candidates as they launched a week filled with tradition, talent, and community celebration.

The parade began at Requel Church on Marion Avenue and concluded at the Richland Carousel, where the contestants greeted fans, signed autographs, and carried on the fun of the day with the beloved "Show Me Your Shoes" tradition — showcasing their creativity and platforms with custom-decorated shoes.

The community gave a warm welcome to all of this year's candidates, their families, and guests. As the week continues, there are plenty of opportunities for residents and visitors alike to take part in the festivities.

Miss Ohio's Teen Competition will be Wednesday, June 18, at 7 pm, at the Renaissance Theatre, 138 Park Avenue West, Mansfield. Eighteen teen contestants will take the stage in hopes of becoming Miss Ohio's Teen 2025 and representing Ohio at the national competition this September.

The Miss Ohio Preliminary Night #1 will be Thursday, June 19, at 7 pm at the Renaissance Theatre. The competition begins for 28 Miss Ohio candidates. "Scarlet" flight (Contestants 1-14) will compete in Talent and On-Stage Conversation. "Grey" flight (Contestants 15-28) will compete in Health & Fitness and Evening Gown.

Miss Ohio Preliminary Night #2 will be Friday, June 20, at 7 pm at the Renaissance Theatre. Roles reverse for night two with "Grey" flight competing in Talent and On-Stage Conversation, while "Scarlet" takes the stage for Health & Fitness and Evening Gown.

The Miss Ohio Final Night and Crowning is scheduled for Saturday, June 21, at 7 pm at the Renaissance Theatre. The top ten semi-finalists will compete one final time in all phases of competition, culminating in the crowning of Miss Ohio 2025. She will go on to represent the state at the Miss America Competition in September.

Purchase tickets for all events at <https://rentickets.org>.

Whether you're a lifelong fan of the Miss Ohio tradition or joining the excitement for the first time, this week is packed with opportunities to support the candidates and celebrate the talent, poise and service that define Miss Ohio Week. Welcome to Mansfield, and best of luck to all the contestants!

(More Photos on Page 6 & 7)



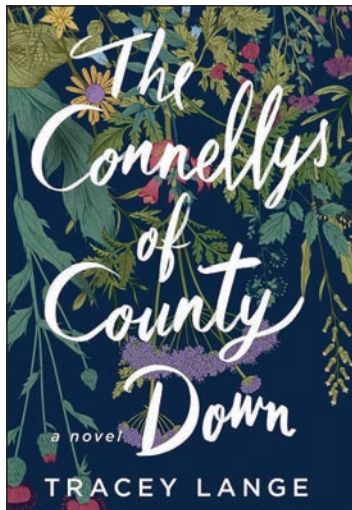
Miss Ohio Parade Grand Marshal Doc Sumbo



## LOST IN A BOOK



A Book Review  
By Mandy Belczak Gurney



A bookish friend introduced me to author Tracey Lange and now I'm hooked.

*The Connellys of County Down* was a story of family, loyalty, recovering from childhood hurts and the bonds that keep us showing up for our siblings no matter what.

Tracey Lange knows how to write a charter driven story with beautiful development. She also made me laugh along the way.

My rating: ★★★★★

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Issue

## OUMC welcomes Rev. J.P. Snyder as new pastor

Ontario United Methodist Church has announced its new pastor as Rev. J.P. Snyder.

He will serve at both Galion St. Paul and Ontario UMC.

His family includes wife, Jocelyn, and two children.

"We feel called to ministry together as a 'family on mission,' seeking daily to follow Jesus, our Good Shepherd and risen Lord, and serve Him with our whole selves," said Rev. Snyder.

"In our approach, we seek to be Christ-centered, Bible-based, missionally-focused, discipleship-driven, grace-filled and Spirit-led. Our goal with God's help is to be God-honoring, lay-empowering and kingdom-building."

"We believe that the good news of the Bible, the love of Jesus and the work of the Holy Spirit are more than sufficient to transform every single life, to help each person find their purpose and potential, and to experience true joy."

"One of my favorite verses is Ephesians 2:10, which calls all to be God's 'poiēma,' meaning workmanship, and is where we get our English word, poem."

"We desire to see God redeem and restore His beloved people, his one universal Church and ultimately His world, through the transforming love of Jesus Christ and His Word through what John Wesley called the 'spread of scriptural holiness.'"

A few of our passions have been recovery groups, chaplaincy ministries, coaching, mentoring, cycling and running."



## THE ENTERTAINMENT EXAMINER

— By Ian Stumbo —



Now steaming on Peacock is a movie from earlier this year called *Love Hurts*.

Oscar winner Ke Huy Quan stars as Marvin, a real estate agent who was an assassin in a former life. When his past comes back to haunt him, he must try to balance his current easy going lifestyle with his dangerous one that has re-entered unexpectedly.

Quan is a great actor and its wonderful to see him back in the spotlight after being away from acting for so long, though this movie does not suit him or anyone involved. Fellow Oscar winner Ariana DeBose and his former *Goonies* co-star Sean Astin are also in this film but everyone is so over the top it's difficult to take them all seriously.

Quan is good with the action scenes and some of those



sequences were interesting though by the end the movie is just plain boring. The plot is uninteresting, the supporting characters are forgettable and Quan, as good as he is, is supported by bad writing. At only 85 minutes, this movie really drags which is saying something.

*Love Hurts* looked like it would be a fun time and a big hit when released around Valentine's Day though it was anything but.

Besides a few fun action montages, the script and the cast were wasted in a movie that made 85 minutes seem like two hours and that is a terrible thing to do to a moviegoer (or a critic).



## Rep. John votes in support of the E-Verify Workforce Integrity Act

Ohio House Majority Floor Leader Marilyn John (R-Richland County) voted in support of the E-Verify Workforce Integrity Act, H.B. 246, legislation to ensure all workers hired in Ohio for covered construction projects are legally authorized to work in the U.S.

"In order to ensure safety and quality for residents of the State of Ohio, the E-Verify program makes certain construction employees are qualified to work on state projects," said John.

The bill also empowers the attorney general to investigate suspected violations, issue notices of violation and pursue enforcement through the courts, if necessary. Penalties include fines, disqualification from state contracts for up to two years and license suspension or revocation, especially when unauthorized workers are knowingly employed.

The bill advances to the Ohio Senate for further consideration.

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Vol. 64  
No. 36

## Tribune-Courier



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# News Briefs

Richland County Children Services (RCCS) will team up with community partners Richland Newhope, Richland County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Catalyst Life Services, Mansfield Branch-YMCA of North Central Ohio and Richland Public Health for the Together We Move 5K & 1-miler Fun Run.

The event will be Saturday, July 26. The 5K starts at 9 am at the Mansfield YMCA and the 1-Miler Fun Run starts at 10:15 am at Sterkel Park. Race day registration opens at 8 am.

Sign up at <https://runsignup.com/Race/OH/Mansfield/TogetherWeMove5K>

★

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 be June 25, with a pork dinner. The McCready Kids will perform.

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

★

First English Lutheran Church, 53 Park Avenue West will be offering senior boxes of non perishable food provided by the Greater Cleveland Food Bank from 10:30 am to 12:30 pm or until supplies run out. This comes with a 15 lb. box of fresh produce and a two lb. box of cheese.

These items are free to those who qualify by age (60+) and low income guidelines. Recipients must have at least one person age 60 or older in the household.

These items are available on the fourth Tuesday of each month, year round. The distribution is held in the South Mulberry Street parking lot. The next distribution is Tuesday, June 24.

★

Dayspring will host the 6th Annual Hope Run 5K and 1 Mile Walk on Saturday, June 28.

The 5k and 1 mile will step-off at 10 am, beginning and ending at Dayspring, 3220 Olivesburg Rd., Mansfield. The course is cross-country with rolling hills and trails. The event will be held rain or shine unless there is extreme weather.

Cost is \$20 and race day registration begins at 9 am.

Prizes will be awarded in every category.

An entry form can be found on the Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/DayspringAssistedLivingCareFacility>.

Proceeds will benefit Friends of Dayspring in support of the next Dayspring Levy Campaign. For information call 419-565-3694 or email [Rileyboy0907@gmail.com](mailto:Rileyboy0907@gmail.com).

★

This summer, the 122nd Army Band is hitting the road to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States Army with a family-friendly concert tour across Ohio.

With a mix of classic rock, pop hits, patriotic favorites and original

arrangements, ensembles bring the sound of today's Army to stages across the state.

The 122nd Army Band Victory Vibes Concert will be held Saturday, June 28, at 7 pm at Ashland High School, 1440 King Rd., Ashland. The event is hosted by Ashland Visual and Performing Arts.

★

Lexington Church of the Cross UMC, 236 Otterbein Dr., Lexington, is hosting Wonderful Wednesdays now through July 30, from 10-11:30 am.

The Wednesdays will include crafts, snacks, games, music and stories. A fiesta will be held Aug. 3, at 11 am.

For information and registration call 419-884-2150 or visit [www.churchofthecrosslex.com](http://www.churchofthecrosslex.com).

★

Junior Achievement of North Central Ohio will host the Annual Golf Classic on Monday, July 21 at Deer Ridge Golf Course in Bellville. The event supports financial literacy, career readiness and entrepreneurship education for thousands of K-12 students across our rural communities.

Cost is \$600 for a four-person team and the fee includes lunch, snacks, SuperTicket, drink tickets and contests. Cash prizes include awards for first, second, middle of the pack and 24th place. There will be a putting contest, hole-in-one challenge, closest to the pin, longest drive and more.

For information or to register visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/shcgo/event/2025drgolfgolfclassic/>

★

A recycling trailer will be in the parking lot at Ontario United Methodist Church, 3540 Park Avenue West, June 28 and 29.

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.

★

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Bellville, 25 Church St., Bellville, will host Brian Moore on Sunday, June 22, at 10:30 am. The subject will be "Stairway To Heaven: This Is A Song Of Hope." For information visit [www.allsoulsuuohio.org](http://www.allsoulsuuohio.org).

★

The Big Green Garage Sale at the Ashland County Fairgrounds will be accepting donations. Gently used, clean items will be accepted.

This sale benefits the Ashland County 4-H program.

Donations will be accepted in the green building Wednesday June 18, 10 am to 6 pm; and Thursday, June 19, 10 am to 2 pm.

★

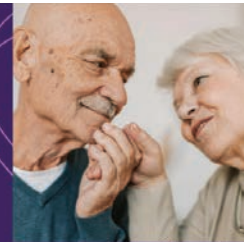
Light up the Valley 2025 will be held Sunday, June 29. This annual community firework celebration will include food trucks, activities, live entertainment, prizes, and more — all locally funded and planned. Activities will be held from noon to 11 pm at 119 Hines Ave., Bellville.

★

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



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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

Office Hours: Tu., W., Th. 9 am to 1 pm

10:30 am Sunday Worship

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 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 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 Worship • 11 am Sunday School

Bible Study Mondays 2 pm

## Summer music program begins at RAA in July

Richland Academy of the Arts (RAA) has announced the launch of Keyboard-4-Kids, a summer music program designed to introduce children to the joy of playing piano in a collaborative and creative environment.

This program is made possible through the Summertime Kids Grant from the Richland County Foundation.

Running July 8-31, Keyboard-4-kids will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10-11 am and is open to children ages 8-12.

The cost for the entire program is \$35.

This program focuses on foundational music keyboard skills and encourages young learners to explore, note reading, rhythm reading, basic composition and group collaboration.

"This program is a wonderful opportunity for kids to discover the basics of music in a hands-on, engaging way," said Dr. Michael Benson instructor at RAA. "We believe early exposure to music can spark lifelong creativity and confidence."

Class will be held at RAA, 75 N. Walnut St., Mansfield.

Interested families can learn more by visiting [www.richlandacademy.com](http://www.richlandacademy.com) or calling 419-522-8224.

## Benefit auction planned for Sara Saxton

A Live Auction for Sara Saxton will be held Sunday, June 29 at 1 pm at The River Rock, 7 Main St., Bellville.

Sara is a bartender/server at The River Rock in Bellville.

On June 2, Sara was diagnosed with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. She is at The James Cancer Center and has started treatment immediately.

Donations of items to be auctioned off are being accepted with all proceeds going to Sara and her family.

To donate gift baskets, gift cards or other items, drop off at The River Rock by June 29 at noon. For more information call the River Rock at 419-886-2599.

At the event, please wear orange in support of Sara.



# Mansfield Speedway breaks ground on ambitious future

Photos and Article By Traci Little

The rumble of engines may be quiet for now, but excitement was in the air as local officials, racing enthusiasts, and community members gathered for the groundbreaking ceremony at Mansfield Speedway. New owners Matt and Jordan Tiftt have launched an ambitious redevelopment of the historic 178-acre oval track, envisioning it as a multi-use entertainment destination that will serve as a hub for motorsports, live events, and family fun for years to come.

The Tiftts officially acquired the property on June 2 for \$2.25 million through Matt Tiftt Motorsports LLC, purchasing the land from the Milliron Foundation. With a background in NASCAR and a shared passion for motorsports, the couple is determined to revive the once-thriving facility off Crall Road.

"We're not just bringing back a racetrack," said Matt Tiftt, a former NASCAR driver. "We're reimagining what a racetrack can be in 2025 — a place where racing fans, car lovers, families, and the broader community can come together."

The revamped speedway is expected to reopen in spring 2026, initially operating as a dirt track. The Tiftts are collaborating with Simonson Construction Services, Inc, the original builders of the facility in 2002, to overhaul the grandstands, install new infrastructure, and enhance amenities. A strong emphasis is being placed on ADA compliance, family accessibility, and creating a welcoming environment for everyone.

"This is the people's track," said Jordan Tiftt. "We want to make sure everyone—regardless of age, background, or ability—can enjoy a day at the races, a festival, or a concert here."

## A Vision Beyond Racing

While racing remains at the heart of the Mansfield Speedway revival, the Tiftts are planning a broader range of offerings to establish the venue as a year-round destination. Upcoming features will include a beer garden and VIP deck, kid zones, party porches on the grandstands, and even future additions like a go-kart track in the infield and paintball in the back field.

"Our vision is to bring families together, whether they're here for grassroots motorsports, drifting, car tuning events, food truck festivals, or holiday light shows," Matt said. "We want to reignite that childhood excitement I felt when I first went to a dirt track with my dad."

A special highlight on the horizon is a massive holiday light show and Christmas village that will transform the speedway in the winter season. Jordan described the event as a drive-through experience along the access road, complete with LED displays and a Santa-themed village on the track.

## Building the Dream Team

To bring the project to life, the Tiftts have assembled a strong leadership team, including track general manager Brad McCown, a veteran of the dirt track scene and former owner of Atomic Speedway. McCown spent 17 years racing at Atomic Speedway in the Chillicothe/Waverly area — running modifieds, bombers, and that kind of thing. After stepping away from Atomic Speedway, he began looking for a new venture, and this opportunity really stood out.

"Our vision is to make Mansfield a true destination again—something for everyone. You might not like dirt racing, but love monster trucks, or maybe it's concerts or drifting. Our goal is to offer a diverse schedule and affordable fun. We're also putting a big focus on kids—they're the future of this place. We're planning to build a new go-kart track just for them. Our goal is to keep things affordable—reasonable ticket prices, good food like hot dogs, and a family-friendly environment where people can spend the weekend having a great time together," said McCown.

While Matt is the public face, he's quick to credit Jordan as "the brains behind the operation."

## A Collaborative Approach

The Tiftts made it clear that their goal is not to compete with other local tracks but to complement the regional motorsports community. Located within an hour of Columbus and Cleveland, the speedway hopes to draw fans from all over the state and beyond while respecting existing race schedules.

"We've been welcomed so warmly by the Mansfield community,"

said Jordan, originally from South Florida. "The support and positivity have been overwhelming. This already feels like a second home."

Simonson Construction's Shaw Rader, whose team built the original facility, expressed both nostalgia and excitement. "It's bittersweet to see what's become of the track, but we're thrilled to be back and ready for the challenge of restoring it," he said. Rader confirmed that the track will be regraded and resurfaced with specialized clay to create ideal racing conditions.

(Continued on Page 32)



## Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors

Marjorie Pitcher, May 30  
Clarence Floyd Roessler Jr., June 5  
Myra Lynn McIntyre, June 6  
Melvin Lee Chew Jr., June 7  
Kelli Michelle Thomas, June 7

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

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## Twelve will compete for Miss Ontario crown next week

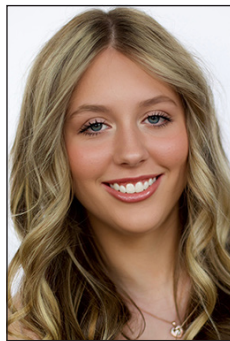
The Little and Junior Miss Ontario pageants are scheduled for Wednesday, June 25, at 6:30 pm and the Miss Ontario pageant will be held Sunday, June 29, at 6:30 pm.

Both pageants will be held in the Ontario Middle School Auditorium, 447 Shelby-Ontario Rd., Ontario. Admission is \$5 per person and free for kids under five. Proceeds will go to the Miss Ontario Scholarship Program. All Miss Ontario contestants will be in the Ontario 4th of July parade. (Photos by Maria Gallo)

Admission is \$5 per person and free for kids under five. Proceeds will go to the Miss Ontario Scholarship Program. All Miss Ontario contestants will be in the Ontario 4th of July parade. (Photos by Maria Gallo)



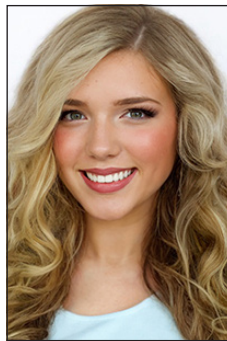
Morgyn Beasley



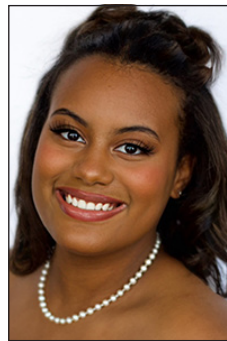
Kiera Hughes



Aadilynne Kightlinger



Lillian Ladner



Makalya Lawerence



Ryann Messer



Naomi Noureldin



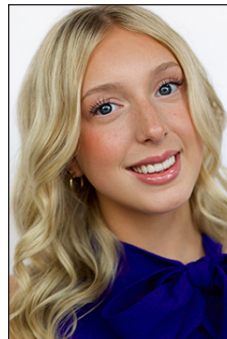
Scarlet Rehberg



Hannah Rox



Briar Samules



Carlie Schnittke



Kendall Thomas

### Little & Junior Miss Pageant



Wednesday, June 25 at 6:30 PM

**MISS ONTARIO**  
PAGEANT & SCHOLARSHIP ORGANIZATION

**Ontario Middle School Auditorium**  
Tickets are \$5 a person  
Kids 5 and under get in free

### Miss Ontario Pageant



Sunday, June 29 at 6:30 PM



# Lexington family continues to to pay it forward by founding Visual Bucket List

By Traci Little

I had the wonderful opportunity to meet a remarkable young lady named Lizzy Myers and her family at a Visual Bucket List Foundation fundraiser hosted by the Ontario Lions Club at Tractor Supply in Ontario last Saturday, June 14.

Locals had the opportunity to visit the Ontario Ohio Lions Club Food Trailer this past weekend to raise money for the Visual Bucket List Foundation. The Lions served hot dogs, bratwurst, chips and pop — with a portion of the proceeds going to support this life-changing mission.

At just 15 years old, Lizzy is a vibrant, thriving teenager whose joyful spirit and contagious smile could light up any room. She chooses to live life fully — chasing her dreams as if there's nothing standing in her way, even though she faces a rare and progressive condition that could one day take her vision.

In 2015, when Lizzy was just five years old, her parents, Steve and Christine Myers, were told that she had mild to moderate bilateral sensorineural hearing loss. Searching for answers, they pursued genet-

ic testing — and received life-altering news. Lizzy was among the small percentage of children with hearing impairments who are also diagnosed with Usher Syndrome Type 2A, a rare genetic disorder that causes hearing loss at birth and gradual vision loss through a condition called Retinitis Pigmentosa (RP). The disease typically begins with night blindness in adolescence, followed by a narrowing of peripheral vision—tunnel vision—that can lead to total blindness in some cases.

Rather than waiting in fear for that day to come, Steve and Christine resolved to fill Lizzy's world with beauty — to make sure her eyes saw as much wonder and joy as possible while she could still see. And from that moment, the Visual Bucket List was born.

The idea was simple: create a personalized list of meaningful visual experiences for Lizzy to see, savor, and hold in her memory. Some goals were grand—watching a Broadway show, visiting the Grand Canyon, or digging for real fossils—but many were simple and soulful: catching fireflies in the backyard, watching sunsets, counting

(Continued on Page 9)



Christine, Lizzy, Makayla and Steve Myers

Photo By Traci Little

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# •Lexington family continues to to pay it forward by founding Visual Bucket List

(Continued from Page 8)

rainbow colors, roasting marshmallows over a bonfire, and marveling at the stars.

One of Lizzy's first bucket list experiences was a private stargazing night at a local observatory in Mansfield. Lizzy had always loved the stars but had never seen them through a telescope. That magical moment was witnessed by local journalist Kaitlin Durbin, who published a front-page story that would spark a wave of community generosity.

The response was overwhelming. Offers of help came pouring in. One anonymous donor even made it possible for the Myers family to travel to Rome, where Pope Francis personally blessed Lizzy's eyes — a moment her parents describe as a priceless, unforgettable gift.

Inspired by the kindness and love poured into their own family, the Myers didn't stop with Lizzy's story. They launched The Visual Bucket List Foundation — a nonprofit dedicated to granting similar vision-rich experiences for other children up to age 18 who face severe visual impairment or eventual blindness. Their goal: to create personalized, unforgettable moments that these children and their families can treasure for a lifetime. Each experience is unique and personalized to the child's dreams and interests. Their mission is to create lasting visual memories to color their minds in the event their world goes dark.

Since 2017, the Foundation has provided for over 18 individuals and their families to have their bucket list dreams fulfilled from all over the United States! For one girl named Layla, who had already lost vision in one eye, that dream was to see a cheetah up close. The Foundation stepped in to make it happen—ensuring her entire family was part of the experience, so they could share in the memory and support Layla when her vision fades further. Whether on a night flight to view Christmas lights from the sky, a private safari in San Diego, a Dinosaur Dig in South Dakota, snorkeling in the Great Barrier Reef, exploring Yellowstone National Park, in the cockpit and command center for the Blue Angels in Florida, or touring New York City with a private tour of the sites, every child receives a customized VIP experience. VBLF covers all expenses, so families can share the experience together to help reinforce the visual memories.

Christine Myers explains, "It's about more than just one moment—it's about giving families something to hold onto together, something beautiful that lasts long after the lights may dim."

Lizzy's vision has remained stable and continues to chase after her dreams. She continues to take in every butterfly, every flower, and every sunset as a gift. Her joyful perspective on life is what we all could learn from!

"I've planned my future out as if I didn't have my condition. I have dreams to go to college and become a K-3 grade teacher and also to become a TVI (Teacher of the Visually Impaired). I love teaching because I feel like I learn so much as well and I love interacting with children!"

Lizzy would love to teach them braille and other life skills - really just showing them they can truly see the beautiful world around them in different ways. She learned to braille herself as a young girl in Kindergarten.

"I honestly don't even think about my condition anymore. When people ask me about my hearing aids, I'll tell them a little bit, but at this point, I just tell them to look it up," Lizzy giggled.

Lizzy finds there are advantages to her hearing aids - she loves the fact that she has permanent Bluetooth devices to listen to music whenever and whenever she wants and even the occasional "turning them off" selective hearing moments of life come in handy.

"Christine and I know that we can never pay back the gift that was given to us, but we've decided that we're going to spend the rest of our lives trying," said Steve.

The Visual Bucket List Foundation is a living legacy of what it means to turn adversity into action, hardship into hope. It's built not just on Lizzy's dreams, but on the powerful belief that even in the face of darkness, we can choose to create light—for ourselves and for others.

This family's story is a bright example of how grace, generosity, and gratitude can transform not only a diagnosis, but the world around it. Find out more about the Visual Buckeye List Foundation and how you can donate by visiting their website at [www.thevblf.com/](http://www.thevblf.com/) or by visiting their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/visualbucket](http://www.facebook.com/visualbucket)

# Richland SWCD seeks candidates for board supervisor

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) is seeking candidates to fill one open position on the board of supervisors for a term beginning Jan. 1, 2026.

Richland SWCD Board of Supervisors are publicly elected by a special general election conducted by the Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Voting for the 2026 term will begin Aug. 13 and end Sept. 11, 2025. Supervisors are elected to a three-year term as a public official and serve without pay. Candidates must be eighteen years of age or older and own or occupy land within Richland County.

The board of supervisors create an annual and long-term plan of operation that protects the district's mission and vision. Supervisors advocate for the district, attend and participate in monthly board meetings, assist with district programs and services and attend area and state meetings. They are conservation-minded, local leaders who promote conservation of the county's natural resources through education, planning and technical assistance which are key to the success of the district.

Interested candidates should contact Matt Christian, Director, by June 28 at [election@richlandswcd.net](mailto:election@richlandswcd.net) or 419-747-8684.

Richland Soil and Water Conservation District develops, implements, and assists landowners, government agencies and our partners with a wide range of natural resource conservation programs.

# Workshop scheduled

The next Conservation Creation Arts & Crafts Workshop hosted by Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (Richland SWCD) is Tuesday, July 8, at 6 pm at 1495 W. Longview Ave., Mansfield.

In this workshop, participants will create a beautiful and aromatic air freshener to hang with air dry clay, dried flowers and essential oils.

Richland SWCD provides all the materials needed to make the air freshener. The cost is \$12 per person and reservations are required by July 1. To register visit <https://richlandswcd.net/event/conservation-creation-arts-crafts-workshop-sweet-smelling-flowers/> or call 419-747-8685.



# Ontario concerts return

The City of Ontario will host Concerts in the Park at Marshall Park's band shell from 6 to 8 pm this summer.

Concerts are scheduled for:

June 27, Aftermath (4th of July Festival)

July 8, David Perry

July 22, The Return

Aug. 12, Soul Town Live

Aug. 26, Oolong Gurus

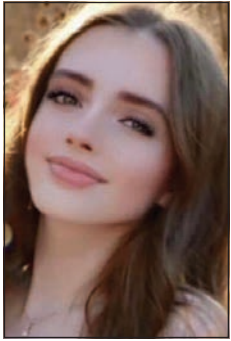


Photo By Traci Little





# 2025 *Lexington High School Graduates*



**Ava  
Arbutina**



**Alexa  
Baddour**



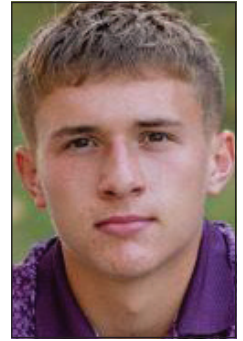
**Natalie  
Badnell**



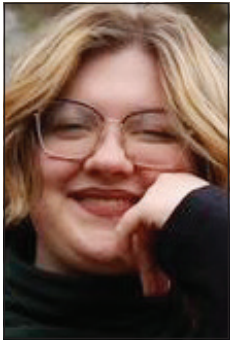
**Bryce  
Barber**



**Logan  
Bartlett**



**Chance  
Basilone**



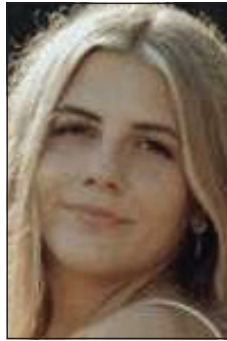
**Lily  
Bauman**



**Aubrey  
Beauford**



**Frederick  
Beer V**



**Ella  
Bekeleski**



**Oden  
Bell**



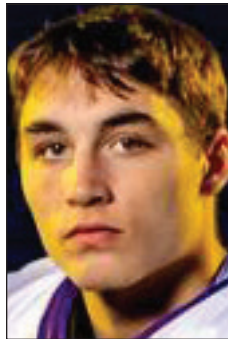
**David  
Biggers IV**



**Eric  
Blackstone**



**Chance  
Boggs**



**Camden  
Boozer**



**Sophie  
Bowman**



**Adelee  
Brane**



**Ariella  
Bratton**

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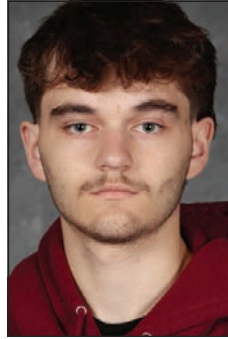
# Lexington High School Graduates 2025



**Emma  
Caldwell**



**Bailey  
Carmichael**



**Evan  
Carpenter**



**Camden  
Carson**



**Dylan  
Catanese**



**Makaree  
Chapman**



**Nevaeh  
Chastain**



**Elliott  
Christie**



**Isaiah  
Church**



**Katherine  
Cicolani**



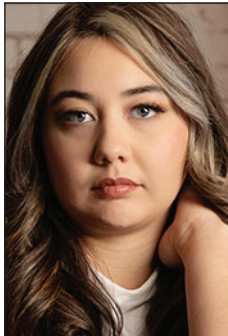
**Chloe  
Clayborne**



**Kylah  
Cochran**



**Kennedy  
Collins**



**Alana  
Cornell**



**Madeline  
Cramer**



**Mateo  
Cruz**



**Addison  
Cyrus**



**Jackson  
Davis**

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**Class of 2025**

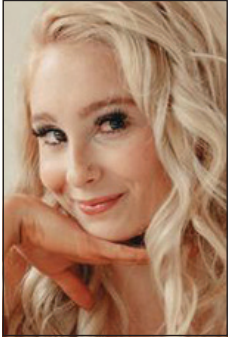
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**Lyla  
Davis**



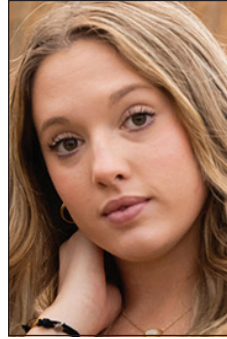
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Dawson**



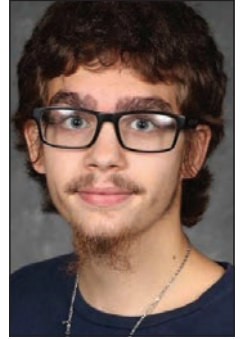
**Alden  
Delacruz**



**Shay  
Detlef**



**Megan  
Dials**



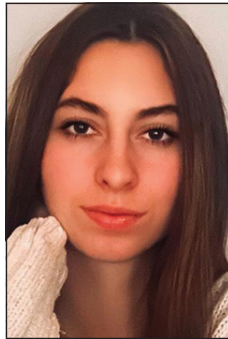
**Jordan  
Emerson Davis**



**Lily  
Feasel**



**Christopher  
Foster**



**Avaia  
Francis**



**Abigail  
Frederick**



**Rylee  
Frost**



**Luciana  
Getz**



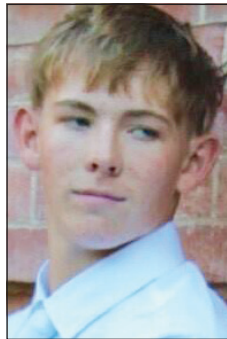
**Taylor  
Giddens**



**Peyton  
Glass**



**Owan  
Gongwer**



**Deven  
Goodman**



**Ian  
Green**



**Hannah  
Griffin**

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**Nicklaus  
Hamler**



**Megan  
Haring**



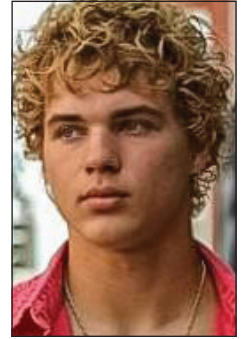
**Logan  
Harrod**



**Adler  
Hatfield**



**Joseph  
Hathaway**



**Bryston  
Hess**



**Cameron  
Hill**



**Samantha  
Hite**



**Kennan  
Hoak**



**Abigail  
Hooker**



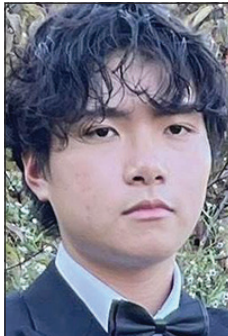
**Sol  
Howard**



**Payton  
Hoyt-Barwick**



**Gavin  
Husty**



**Ethan  
Huynh**



**Penelope  
Jeffrey**



**Kensei  
Johnson**



**Micah  
Jungeberg**



**Jaiden  
Kastran**



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**Lily  
Kastran**



**Troy  
Kingman**



**Joshua  
Koprivnikar**



**Cayden  
Kunkle**



**Kyler  
Lamb**



**Kennedy  
Lamp**



**Moriah  
Lawhorn**



**Sophia  
Layman**



**Alexis  
Leadbetter**



**Jakob  
Legron**



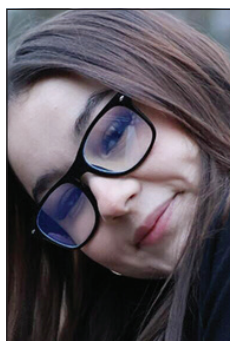
**Noah  
Lewis**



**Gabriel  
Llamas**



**Ronald  
Lott**



**Paige  
Lowe**



**JayByx  
Mack**



**Trevor  
Manuella**



**Cooper  
Marfia**



**Grace  
Masi**

# CONGRATULATIONS

## LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL CLASS OF 2025!



## ArcelorMittal



# Lexington High School Graduates <sup>2025</sup>



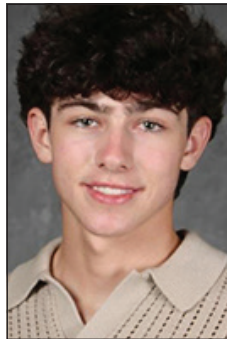
**Trenton  
Mason**



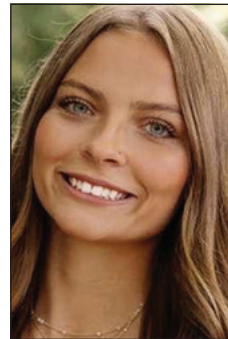
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Massie-Stevens**



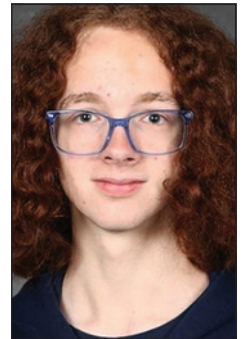
**Adon  
Mateo**



**Evan  
Mathias**



**Ellie  
Mayer**



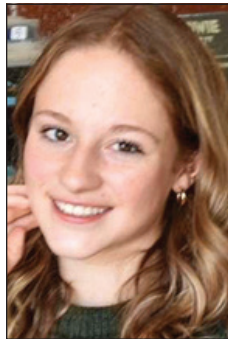
**Maddox  
McCarthy**



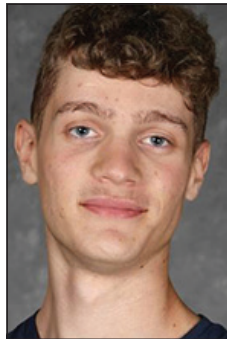
**Landon  
McDermot**



**Breiannah  
Miles**



**Avery  
Miley**



**Jake  
Miller**



**Luke  
Miller**



**Abigail  
Moeglin**



**Max  
Montgomery**



**James  
Morgan**



**Eva  
Mumford**



**Cameron  
Muncy**



**Brooke  
Murray**



**Alexiya  
Neece**



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2025

# Lexington High School Graduates



**Audrey  
Nelson**



**Trey  
Nickoli**



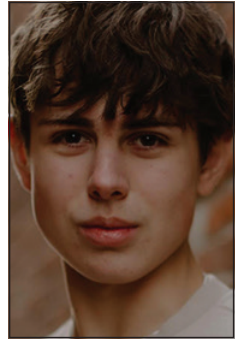
**Addison  
Nicol**



**Gaven  
Norris**



**Lauryn  
Nupen**



**Evan  
Owens**



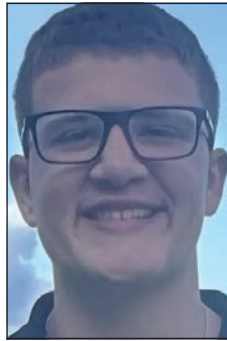
**Alexandrea  
Pace**



**Brett  
Palevich**



**Jeffrey  
Palm Rhoades**



**Camron  
Parks**



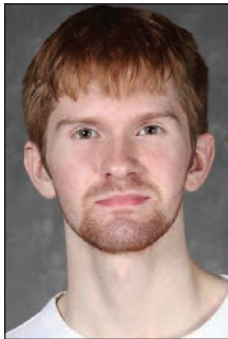
**Reghan  
Pasheilich**



**Isaac  
Peebles**



**Will  
Perkins**



**Caden  
Phillip**



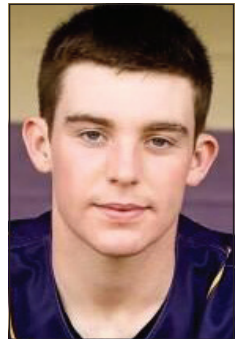
**Taylor  
Phillips**



**Jackson  
Pigg**



**Connor  
Poth**



**Gage  
Powell**



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**Kaitlyn  
Price**



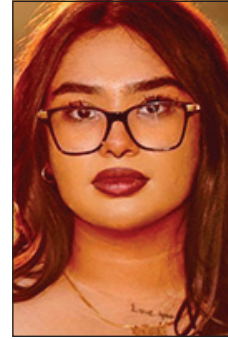
**Coen  
Queen**



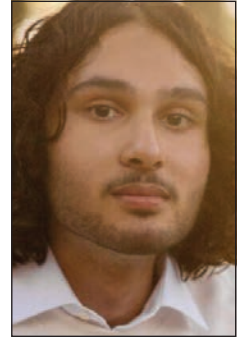
**Owen  
Reamsnider**



**Landen  
Reis**



**Ashlyn  
Riar**



**Aviraj  
Riar**



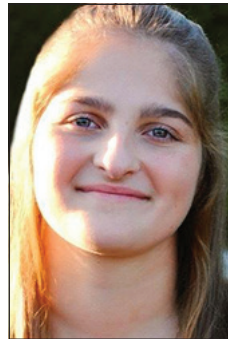
**McKenzie  
Robbins**



**Robert  
Robbins**



**Elizabeth  
Roberts**



**Willow  
Roberts**



**Ethan  
Robles**



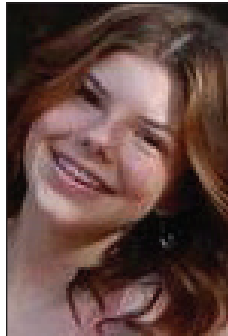
**Logan  
Roseberry**



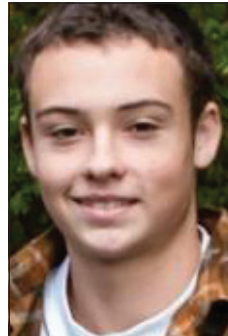
**Haiden  
Ryan**



**Emir  
Sanchez**



**Cynthia  
Sauder**



**Carson  
Saurers**



**Logan  
Sexton**



**Alison  
Shaheen**





2025

# Lexington High School Graduates



**Aidan  
Shepherd**



**Madison  
Sheridan**



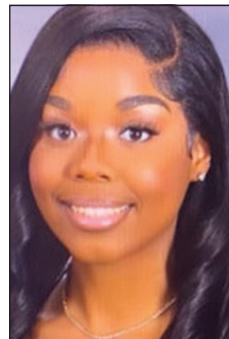
**Preston  
Sheridan**



**Natalie  
Smith**



**Elijah  
Starkey**



**Ja'Nya  
Strickland**



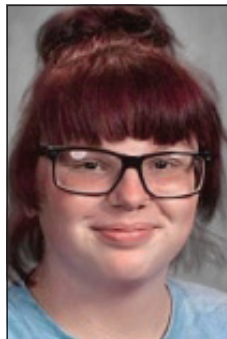
**Konner  
Summers**



**Prestyn  
Taylor**



**Emily  
Thomas**



**Laci  
Thomas**



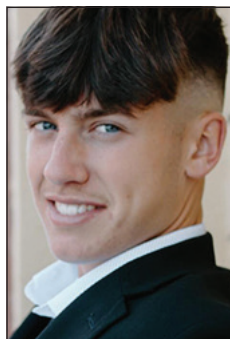
**Landon  
Tingley**



**Ruthann  
Togliatti**



**Robert  
Tringes**



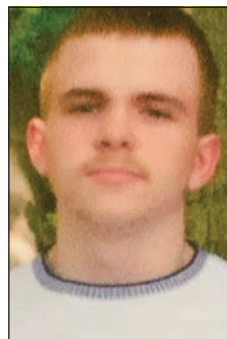
**Noah  
Utt**



**Addison  
Vanderbilt**



**Conor  
Weaver**



**Jeremiah  
Weikle**



**Sierra  
Weingartner**

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*Congratulations Graduates!*

*Best of Luck on  
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# Lexington High School Graduates 2025



**Zoe  
West**



**Ariyah  
White**



**Kylie  
White**



**Preston  
Willis**



**Chayton  
Winters**



**Savannah  
Wolf**



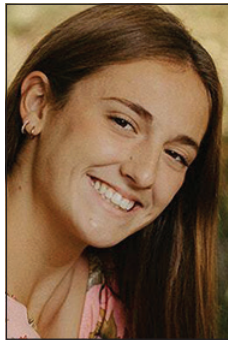
**Malaina  
Wolfe**



**Camron  
Woods**



**Ava  
Worcester**



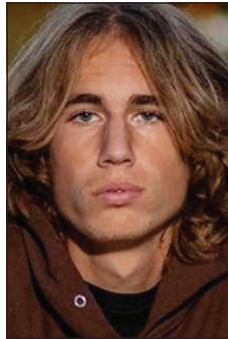
**Julia  
Wyant**



**Grace  
Yeichner**



**Brandon  
Yu**



**Colton  
Yugovich**



**Hannah  
Zack**

**Photos Not Provided For:**  
**Landon Dawson**  
**Kaitlyn Klebowski**  
**Daulton Mangas**  
**Colton Payne**  
**Dane Rein**

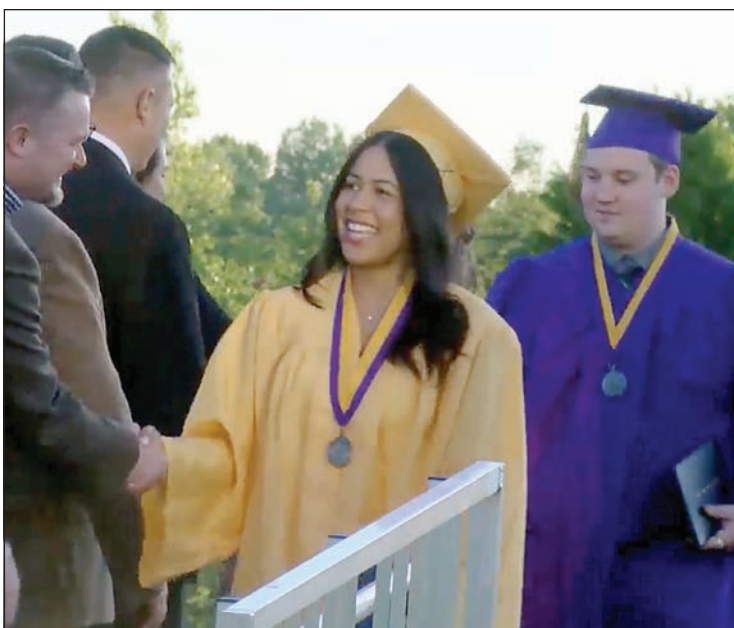


**Congratulations Class of 2025!**

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# 2025 *Lexington High School Graduates*



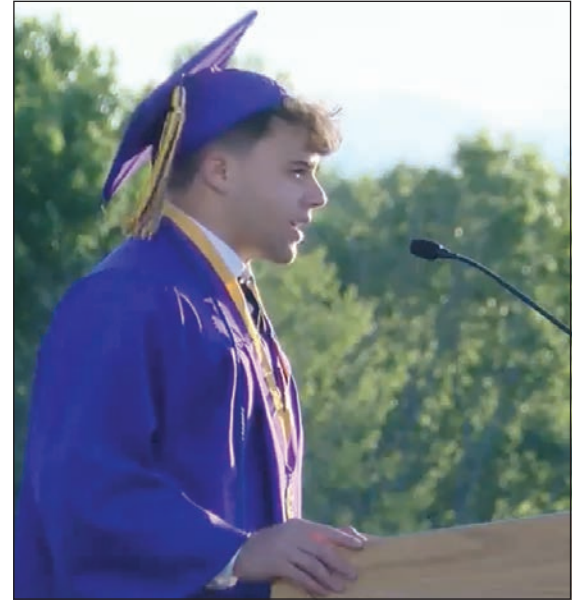
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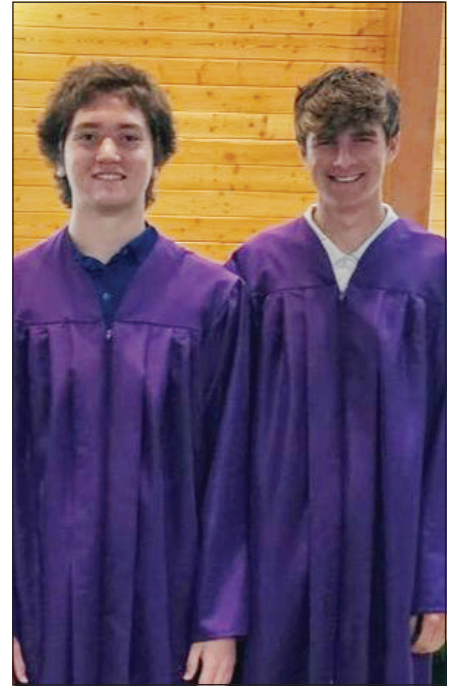


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**2025 Graduates**



2025

# Lexington High School Graduates



To Our 2025 Lexington Senior

Lilly Feasel



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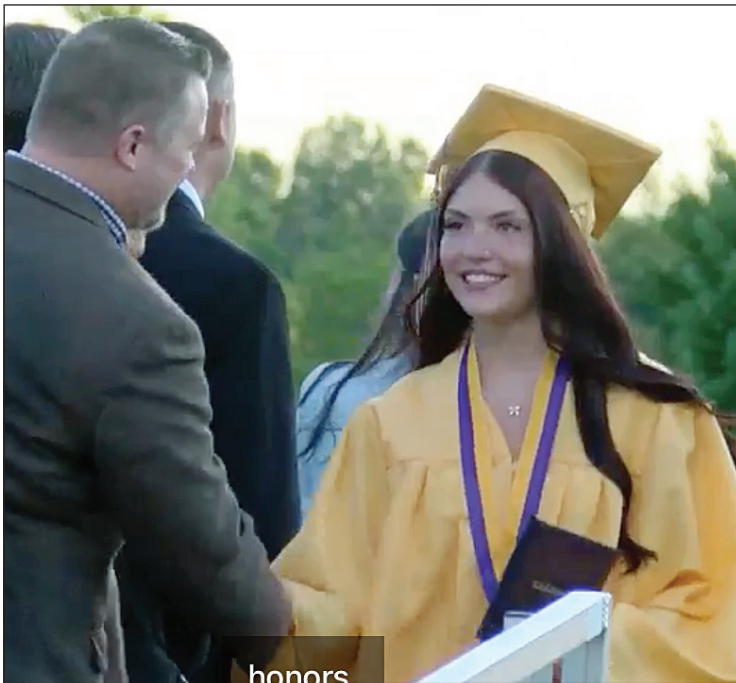
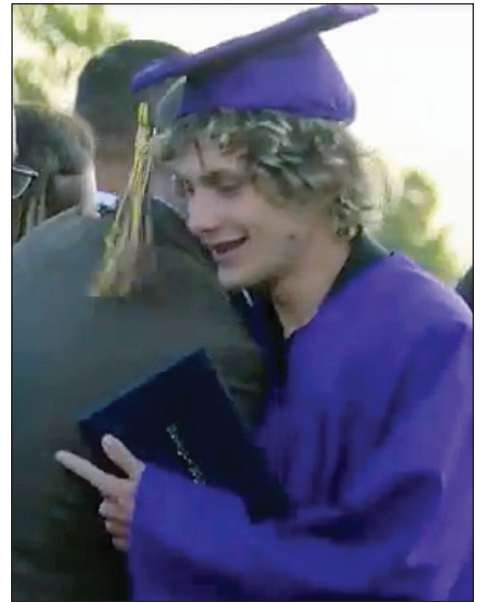


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# Lexington High School Graduates <sup>2025</sup>



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# 2025 *Lexington High School Graduates*



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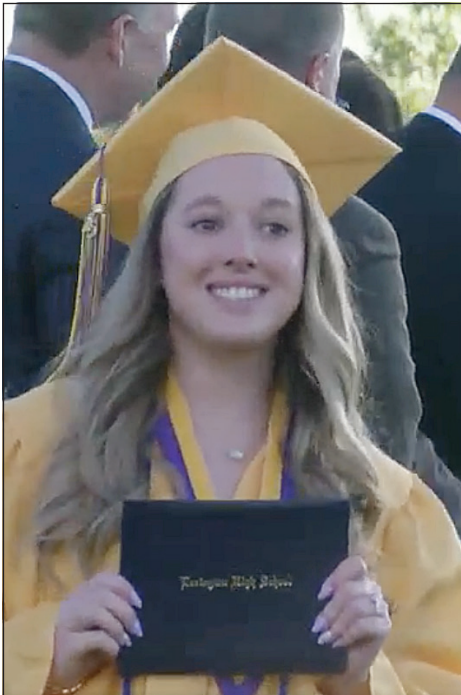
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# Lexington High School Graduates 2025



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2025

# Lexington High School Graduates



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## •MACC hosts graduation

(Continued from Front Page)

To qualify for graduation, students must complete at least 90% of scheduled hours and 100% of required coursework, achieve a 2.0 minimum GPA, complete required externship, clinical or job shadow and complete Bring Your 'A' Game employability/work ethic curriculum.

MACC reported its final 2024 overall completion rate is 83% with 100% having positive post-program placement, 78% working in a related field of their training and 99% earning an industry credential.

MACC provides training to individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, dislocated workers, and employed individuals gaining new skills and/or upgrading their current skills. Programs enable students to complete their training, earn certifications and enter the workforce quickly.

MACC is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges, approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education as an Ohio Technical Center providing post-secondary career technical education and is a member of the Ohio Association of Career Technical and Adult Education.



Photo By Traci Little

find out more!

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# Civil War Living History Days brings the past to life at South Park

Photos and Article By Traci Little

South Park in Mansfield was transformed into a vibrant historical time capsule this past weekend, June 14 and 15, as community members gathered for the annual Civil War Living History Day at 100 Brinkerhoff Ave. This immersive two-day event drew history lovers, families, and curious visitors to experience the sights, sounds and stories of the Civil War era.

Saturday's events began with the booming thunder of cannon fire, officially opening the camp and setting the stage for a day rich in history and storytelling. The first presentation featured Private Rex Maggert, who brought to life "The Day in a Private's Life" with a moving depiction of the daily struggles and routines faced by Civil War soldiers.

Following him was Michael Rhodes, who delivered an insightful session titled "The Daguerreotype — The Soldier, the Tintype, the Historical Impact." Portraying both a civilian itinerant photographer and a Union camp photographer, Rhodes showcased the photographic methods of the 1860s. Using original equipment and authentic materials, he created handmade tintypes — offering visitors the opportunity to purchase a one-of-a-kind historical portrait.

A highlight of the event was a stop at the blacksmith station, where Todd Salsburey, the event's featured blacksmith, gave live demonstrations. He explained the delicate balance of heating and bending metal — stressing the importance of patience and careful attention to avoid breakage. His craft offered visitors a hands-on glimpse into essential wartime trades.

At noon, guests gathered to hear from President Jefferson Davis and First Lady Varina Davis, as reenactors shared personal insights and stories from the perspective of the Confederate first family. Their thoughtful conversation offered a humanizing look into the lives and struggles of those at the helm of the Confederacy.

From 1–2 pm, the reenactor Ladies Tea at the pavilion provided an elegant interlude. Women in period dress welcomed guests with Civil War-era attire, warm tea, and engaging conversation centered on the use of medicinal herbs during the war. This charming gathering added grace and historical depth to the afternoon.

The sound of musket fire rang out as a live skirmish unfolded later in the afternoon, bringing the battlefield to life in vivid, dramatic fashion. The day's programming continued with Diane Virostko, affectionately known as The Civil War Songbird, who performed a stirring solo of patriotic hymns and spirituals that moved the crowd.

John Spaziani closed the main portion of the day with a compelling portrayal of the Battle for Little Round Top, one of Gettysburg's most pivotal moments. As the camp officially closed at 4 pm, anticipation remained high for the evening's feature — an atmospheric Candlelight Lantern Tour through the camps, open to the public and offering a serene, reflective look at life during wartime.

Among the many enriching experiences, visitors explored the historical connection of the Freemasons to the Mansfield Blockhouse. First granted dispensation to convene there in 1814, Masons played significant roles during the Civil War. Of the 410,000 soldiers imprisoned during the war, an estimated 56,000 were Freemasons, many

of whom comforted and assisted fellow Masons—even across battle lines. Guests viewed a recreated Lodge Room, courtesy of Mansfield Lodge #35, and learned how Masonic principles were upheld in both camps.

Nearby, Barbie Salsburey Shults, the beloved Mistress of South Park, welcomed guests into her cozy one-room cabin. She shared fascinating insights into life in the 1860s, including Civil War-era games, recipes, and how the cabin served many purposes for families during that time.

Sunday morning opened with a traditional church service, reinforcing the importance of faith and reflection during the era.

Duncan Virostko began the day's presentations with an overview of Quartermaster responsibilities, shedding light on the logistical backbone of the war effort. Following him, Shelly Schoen delivered a thoughtful session on "Women's Roles During the Civil War," highlighting the strength, sacrifice, and essential contributions of women on and off the battlefield.

Later, John King captivated audiences with his performance as President Abraham Lincoln, portraying "The Four Worst Years of His Life" with powerful emotion and depth. His storytelling brought to life the burdens of leadership during one of the most turbulent times in American history.

The afternoon included another live skirmish, followed by a final appearance by First Lady Mary Lincoln, concluding the day's programming at 4 pm.

Throughout the weekend, Rick Helwig's hourly cannon demonstrations wowed attendees with their authenticity and raw power. Echoing through the park every 45 minutes, the blasts served as a striking reminder of the conflict's intensity.

The Civil War Living History Day remains a cherished annual tradition in Mansfield — bridging the past and present with powerful storytelling, dedicated reenactors, and immersive experiences. Whether drawn by the music, battles, tea, or personal stories, attendees left with a deeper appreciation for history — and a renewed commitment to remember.





# CIVIL WAR LIVING HISTORY DAYS



Bellville • Photo By Mark Shutt



Photos By Traci Little

## Donors can receive Amazon gift card

Atlantic hurricane season began this month. Disasters like hurricanes and severe summer weather can disrupt blood drives for several days and impact the momentum of a growing blood supply.

Help the American Red Cross plan for the unexpected by making an appointment to give blood or platelets.

Even when hospitals are fully stocked with blood products, sudden events can cause a rapid drop in the availability of lifesaving transfusions.

While many may be engaging in outdoor adventures this month, the Red Cross asks people to continue making and keeping donation appointments a part of their June plans.

Blood has a shelf life of 42 days, which means ongoing donations are key to ensure medical needs are met.

Type O blood donors and those giving platelets are especially needed as the summer season continues.

June 19 is World Sickle Cell Day.

Visit [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org), call 1-800-RED CROSS or use the Red Cross Blood Donor App to book a time to donate.

Those who come to give June 1-30 will get a \$15 Amazon.com gift card by email and will be automatically entered for a chance to win one of two \$7,000 gift cards. Terms apply. Visit [RedCrossBlood.org/June](https://RedCrossBlood.org/June).

Upcoming blood donation opportunities include:

Wednesday, June 18, 12-6 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario; and 12-6 pm, Planktown Country Market, 1921 Free Rd., Shiloh

Thursday, June 19, 1-6 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

Friday, June 20, 8 am to 1 pm, Medical Office Building-4th Floor, 335 Glessner Ave., Mansfield; and 11 am to 5 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

Wednesday, June 25, 12-6 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

Friday, June 27, 11 am to 5 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

Monday, June 30, 12-6 pm, The Ontario Center, 2209 Richland Mall, Ontario

## Ontario 4th of July Festival returns

The Ontario 4th of July Festival will be held Friday, June 27 and Saturday, June 28, at Marshall Park in Ontario.

A car show will kick-off the festival at 5:15 pm Friday night and events and activities will begin at 11 am Saturday.

For more information and event schedule visit <https://ontario-4thofjulyfestival.com>.





Photos By Traci Little

## •Mansfield Speedway breaks ground on ambitious future

(Continued from Page 5)

### Community and Economic Impact

Local leaders praised the project's potential to boost tourism, business, and regional pride. Jennifer Wagner of the Richland County Chamber and Economic Development highlighted the speedway's role in generating momentum for growth in the area.

"This project brings renewed energy, opportunity, and visibility to Mansfield," she said.

As the dust settles from the ceremonial shovels, the excitement is just beginning. The Tiffts have lofty ambitions, but with a blend of racing heritage, fresh energy and community spirit, they're well on their way to turning Mansfield Speedway into a modern marvel with deep roots.

"We know it's ambitious," said Jordan. "But that's how great things are done. And with this kind of support, we're more inspired than ever to bring this vision to life."



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## Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

## Local PGA Associate will conduct youth golf clinic

By Kris Leiter

It's been awhile since I've given kudos to you all. A big thank you to our faithful readers and sponsors for keeping our publication on-going since 1961.

I get to chat with locals on a weekly basis and for this week's column I got to sit down with Mike Kathrein.

Kathrein is a teacher at Lexington High School and has been a golf coach of over 20 years. He is a certified PGA Associate and a national co-author.

Hats off to teachers like him who are sometimes underpaid and overworked. But if you ask them, they never seem to mind.

I know Mike personally, as he was my son's golf coach at Lexington in 2005. These past 20 years he has been busy, still teaching youth the game of golf.

If you know much about the crazy game of golf, it can be a funny sport. It lends itself to all ages, can be entertaining and fun and frustrating, all-in-one breath.

I grew up as a youngster playing the game and still love watching it on television. I enjoy the peacefulness of the soft, rolling green grass of the fairways and that little white ball.

Ironically, some days you may want to pull your hair out or throw a club in frustration.

Even if you dread watching the sport on TV, you have to admit seeing the warm, lush grass in a Hawaiian destination makes you feel just a tad warmer as winter hits Ohio.

There is nothing like Ohio spring weather, where you can literally have all 4 seasons in one day. Golf brings us hope that spring is right around the corner.

Over the years, Kathrein has seen a lot of high school golf teams outside of Richland County. He has noticed there were teams that continue to dominate in the OHSAA post-season tournaments, year-after-year so he did some research and he discovered that other areas of the state seem to have a good amount of summer clinics for junior high and high school golfers.

And then it clicked. Why not do the same thing here in Mansfield? Why not do a summer clinic right here in our own backyard?

And that's when the Summer Series Golf Clinic was birthed.

The summer clinic is underway, but it's not too late to join in the fun. The clinic continues every two weeks, with various parts of the

golf game being taught. Golfers can choose to attend all or just one session at Oak Tree Golf Course in Ontario where he is the PGA Associate.

"I decided to start this for the kids," said Kathrein. "After coaching at Lexington for quite a number of years, I decided that I wanted to serve a bigger area. I would take my high school teams into the Columbus area and saw how successful those programs were."

"The common denominator of the successful teams was that junior programs were available to the golfers. So that's what I wanted to do here for the area, and not just Lexington."

"I want to try and get as many kids as possible playing, so we can compete with some of those bigger schools in Columbus. Cincinnati and Cleveland also have really good golf programs."

"Since this is the first year for the clinic, we aren't sure how many people will come out. I was going to do pre-registration, but I thought that might limit people because they may not be able to commit for the duration with family vacations and such."

"These clinics are set up as separate modules, so you can pay as you show up — pay the day of — that way, you don't feel like you're locked into something. Registration is the day of each clinic, so just show up."

"Golfers don't have to have experience to take the clinic. All skill levels are welcome."

The first module began June 7 and the summer series is on-going every two weeks. Each module is \$50.

"We will try to make it enjoyable for everyone, but there might be a youngster who may only come one week and that's ok."

"There's going to be games, competitions and prizes while we work to make it fun and keep things moving along. Our goal is to make the competitions fun and not cut-throat."

"I think our area has been underserved as far as golf clinics. Westbrook Country Club has the PJ Junior program, which we're going to start next year at Oak Tree as well."

To become a certified PGA Associate, Kathrein had to pass a series of tests.

"You have to pass your playability test. That's the the most nerve-racking thing. 36 holes with just a few minutes between rounds. I actually did mine in Springfield. It's like marathon golf — go to the restroom, get a snack and you're back out there."

Kathrein's daughter, Lainey, is also a certified PGA Associate. She played for Mike at Lexington years ago and is helping with the clinic.

"She's also an assistant at Westbrook Country Club and she played golf at Ashland University. She had a great PGA playability test. She needed to make birdie on her final hole. She made a 25-foot putt. She never screamed so loud. Everybody in her group was helping her line it up. That's what I love about golf."

"I've seen her play so many rounds of golf, I really wish I would have been there, but I didn't get to see that one. She gave me a call and I typically know if she's had a good round or a bad round by how soon she calls me."

Remembering back he said, "I also caddied at Springfield a couple times, right out of college. In the summertime, I just needed a job. I knew I didn't want to be a caddy anymore, because they gave me two bags. The players were riding in carts, so I'm chasing a cart with two bags. I asked myself, why are THEY riding in the cart?"

"I was exhausted. I wasn't running, but that was about as fast as I ever want to walk, especially carrying two bags, weighing a total of 80 pounds."

Remember how I said golf can be humorous at times? Mike shared some comical stories from his years of being involved in the game including when he met some famous golfers.

"During the Memorial Tournament, I met Fuzzy Zoeller. He was great. I also met John Daly. He threw a glove at me, but it was an accident. He had a bad hole and he hit some type of wedge onto the green, and it rolled back to his feet. He did this two or three times,"

(Continued on Page 34)



Mike Kathrein



# 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 June 4, 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.

**RESOLUTION NO. 25-05 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE NAMED MAYOR FOR THE DAY, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

**ORDINANCE NO. 25-12 – AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR (OR HIS DESIGNEE) TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT THROUGH BUCKEYE ENERGY BROKERS FOR THE GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM, AT A RATE NOT TO EXCEED \$0.8 PER CCF, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.**

Cathy VanAuker  
Clerk of Council  
City of Ontario, OH  
(T-C 6-12, 19 '25) 28L

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON TROY TOWNSHIP, RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO 2026 ANNUAL TAX BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that on the 30th Day of June, 2025 at 7:00 pm, a Public hearing will be held on the 2026 Annual Tax Budget prepared by the Fiscal Officer of Troy Township, Richland County, Ohio, for the next succeeding fiscal year ending December 31, 2026. Such hearing will be held at Troy Township Hall, 247 South Mill Street, Lexington, Ohio 44904 as part of the regularly scheduled meeting.

The Annual Tax Budget for 2026 is complete and available for public viewing at Troy Township Hall, 247 South Mill Street, Lexington, Ohio

44904. Please call to schedule an appointment between 9:30am and 4:30pm Monday thru Friday.

Elizabeth Michalski,  
Fiscal Officer  
Troy Township  
Village of Lexington, OH  
(T-C 6-19 '25) 26L

## Shakespeare in the Park returns

The Mansfield Shakespeare Company has announced its 2nd Annual Shakespeare in the Park production "Twelfth Night."

Directed by Christopher J. Hartman, this lively Shakespearean comedy is a whirlwind of mistaken identities, mischievous romance and drunken revelry.

Performances are Friday, June 20, at 7:30 pm; June 21, at 7:30 pm; and June 22, at 3:30 pm, at South Park, 100 Brinkerhoff Ave., Mansfield.

This event is free and has a grassy area to place a blanket or lawn chair. Eshelman's Table food truck will be available.

The performances are made possible by The Robert & Esther Black Family Foundation Fund of the Richland County Foundation. With additional support from: REACH, The City of Mansfield Park Department, RCDG Mansfield Arts & Culture Sector and The Ohio State University at Mansfield Theatre Program.

The Mansfield Shakespeare Company is a non-profit organization dedicated to making Shakespeare accessible to the community in a fun and engaging way.

## Sports Highlights

### Local PGA Associate will conduct youth golf clinic

(Continued from Page 33)

Kathrein chuckled. "He finally just grabs the putter, whacks the ball up there and puts out the hole. As he's walking off the green, he threw the glove and hit me. I'm like, 'I guess I'll take your glove.' I wasn't going to ask him to sign the glove, as he was too ticked off."

Mike attended Lexington through his junior year, but his family moved to Columbus his senior year.

"I graduated from Olentangy High School, and at that time, there was only one high school in that district."

If you know anything about that school district, it now has four high schools, with a fifth high school planned in the near future.

It is actually the fourth largest school district in the State of Ohio, and its not slowing down anytime soon

"It's just amazing how that area has just exploded," said Kathrein.

Looking back on coaching at Lexington he said, "I didn't really establish playing positions. I like to rotate people. Sometimes I'll pair-up the number one man with number two man or three man because it's not as stressful. I like to give them different opportunities."

"I think the best Lexington ever finished was tenth-place, and they only have 12 teams. New Albany has at least four state titles. Olentangy has two really solid golf programs, and so does Cleveland."

"Those schools are constantly making trips to the state tournament and their scores are great. They have junior programs. They're starting students young and retaining them and that makes all the difference," Kathrein said.

"If you have a youngster and you are thinking about getting them a good starter set of clubs, you can check out eBay. Golf is very expensive, and until you know that the student is going to be locked-in and really wants to do it, I wouldn't invest too much initially."

"Westbrook Country Club right here in Mansfield is a great resource. You don't have to be a member to purchase items from their pro shop. Places selling gently used sports equipment can also be a great place for new players to get starter clubs."

The clinic continues with June 28, Full Swing and Shot-Making; July 12, Course Management and Shot-Making; and July 26, 18-hole Tournament. All clinics are from 3-5 pm. Visit the Oak Tree Golf Club Facebook page for more information.

Watch for part two of my interview with Mike Kathrein as we dive into his life as a co-author.

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LAINEY KATHREIN is a PGA Associate who is helping her dad, Mike, with the summer golf clinic.