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**FAIRFIELD EDITION**

January 15 - 28, 2024

## Slater's announces closing, invites community to a gratitude party

To our wonderful community, Our grandparents, Henrietta and Albert "Bob", started Slater's Hardware because they saw the opportunity and a need for a hardware store in our community. With hard work, grit, and a determined spirit, they opened the first Slater's Hardware on Maple Street in 1946.

Over the last 78 years, our family has evolved the business to meet the needs of our customers and community, as well as our own personal passions. What started as a hardware store has grown into a hub of hobbies, lamp

shop, locksmithing, strongman equipment, home brewing supplies, antiques, monarch butterflies, affordable housing, and so much more. We are grateful for the legacy our grandparents started, and we are honored to be part of it.

As we continue to carry their legacy forward and evolve our family's businesses, we have made the bittersweet decision to close our doors. This was a difficult decision for our family, which comes as a result of a restructuring phase for Slaters, Inc.



### Important News from the SLATER FAMILY

Slater's Hardware has been an integral part of our lives and the community for multiple generations. Our grandparents' vision and dedication were carried forward by their sons, Jon and Jim.

Through the years, the third generation, which included Lou Ann Slater Weisenstein, Jon Slater Jr., Steve Slater, and Jackie Slater

*Continues on page 2*

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# A-C FFA incredibly successful at the national level

Last month at the 96th National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana, multiple A-C FFA members earned incredible achievements. There are over 900,000 FFA members in all 50 states of the U.S. and only six National FFA Officers. One of our own, a 2021 graduate Morgan Anderson is now one of those six. She was elected as the Eastern Region Vice President of the National FFA Organization. Morgan previously served as the 2021 Ohio FFA Vice-President, where she traveled the state serving our FFA members. To be elected as a national officer she

had to go through multiple different extensive interviews, and complete a series of intense relevant paperwork. She was picked by a national committee of FFA members, where they interviewed and selected her from over 30 other candidates. She worked extremely hard for the opportunity to earn this position, it takes an incredibly dedicated person to complete this process, we could not ask for someone better to represent our chapter and our state at the national level. This is an absolutely incredible accomplishment! We are so proud of you Morgan!

In addition, our 2023 state winning A-C FFA Agricultural Communications team competed and then eventually earned the right to move on to the finals where they placed 4th in the country. Our team consisted of Hannah Saum, Emily Buckley, Riley McKeska and Rachel Weaver. To add to their success Hannah also placed 4th in the nation individually. This is the 10th time that the A-C FFA Agricultural Communications team has won a state championship and competed nationally. No other school from Ohio has ever placed as high nationally as we have in this Career Development Event.

Jillian Bennet also won the state competition in Job interview last year earning the right to compete nationally in the Employment skills CDE where she earned a silver rating. Less than 20 other FFA members from around the country placed that high. This is a very challenging competition as it is an individual competition, where you must complete a cover letter, resume, job application, personal interview, phone interview and follow up letter.

Our A-C FFA Agricultural Issues team also won the state

competition last year for the 7th time and competed at the National FFA Convention last month earning a bronze rating. Our team consisted of Madelyn Anderson, Madison Cordle, Emma Strickler, Cate Buckley and Caidyn Garee. This team worked extremely hard to get to the national competition. Where they presented their issue of: Are Solar Farms on Farmland the Answer. They introduced their topic to a panel of judges in the form of a verbal debate presentation, and with a slide show.

Finally, we had three members; Trevor Spence, Logan Craycraft and Morgan Anderson all earn their American FFA Degree. This is the highest degree an FFA member can earn. It is awarded to high school graduate members with demonstrated leadership, community service, academic success and outstanding SAE programs. We are extremely proud of our past members, as this is a very difficult award to receive. They had to keep up with the recording keeping of their SAEs even after they graduated. This is such an incredible accomplishment for members of our chapter!

It is very safe to say that of the thousands of schools in the United



Morgan Anderson submitted

States there is no other school in the country that had three successful CDE teams and one National Officer other than ours here at Amanda-Clearcreek. We are so proud of all of our members who continue to work hard all year round, the hard work that they put in continues to pay off year after year, as our success shows at the state and national level. Congratulations to all our A-C FFA members for representing not only our FFA Chapter, but our school and our state in such an incredible way.

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## FMC welcomes first baby of 2024



LANCASTER, OHIO – The first baby born in 2024 at Fairfield Medical Center is LiLiana Jean Rhodes, son of Amanda Tomlinson and Ryan Rhodes of Stoutsville. Baby LiLiana was born at 10:54 p.m. on Jan. 2, weighing in at 9 lbs. and measuring 21.5 inches long. The Fairfield Medical Center Maternity Services staff presented the family with a gift basket that included a diaper caddy, piggy bank, my first teddy bear, safety supplies, a book, announcement board, blanket, wipes and other goodies.



Amanda Tomlinson, Ryan Rhodes and LiLiana Rhodes. submitted

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## Cover story continued

have owned and operated the business. The fourth generation was also involved in various aspects of the business. Nathan Weisenstein, Lou Ann's son, devoted the past 17 years to the store and filled the role of locksmith and department manager. Landon Slater, Steve's son, assisted in managing the strength department and brought a fresh perspective and commitment for more than five years. We recognize the impact this may have on our community and customers, and we want to express our gratitude for your unwavering commitment to our family business.

Moving forward, Slater Strength Equipment will be part of Slater Strength LTD and will be operated by Steve and Susie Slater. The lock shop will be owned and operated by Nathan Weisenstein and will be called Nate's Lock and Key. Our family will slowly close our storefront location between now and the end of February.

We recognize the bits of sadness that come with this change, and we want to express our gratitude for your part as the customer and friend to our family business. We want to take a special time to celebrate our employees, our customers, and our community. Please join us Friday, January 26 (our grandmother Henrietta's birthday) and Saturday, January 27 for our "Community Gratitude Party" by stopping by the store to reminisce and enjoy some refreshments together.

The legacy of Slater's Hardware will forever hold a special place in our hearts. It has been a testament to the Slater family's values and commitment to serving our community, especially with the help from all of you. From the bottom of our hearts, we thank you for your support over the last 78 years.  
*With love and gratitude,  
The Slater Family*

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# Hank's Law

## "Never Give Up on Your Dreams"

by Amy Carpenter, Ph.D.

In November of 2014 I lost my dog Hank to sarcoma, a rare disease of the connective tissue. I was so heartbroken. I decided I had to try to find out more about the disease that took my best friend from me.

I combed the Internet and found the Sarcoma Foundation of America. Sarcoma Foundation of America is an organization that shares information about sarcoma and gives patients treatment options and information about clinical trials. I noticed that they had several free conferences all across the United States. I decided I needed to go to these conferences to learn about this disease.

While attending these conferences, I met so many nice people and I learned so much about sarcoma. While at the conferences, I kept hearing that they wanted to get a bill passed to make July "Sarcoma Awareness Month." They said this would help get the signs out to the public in hopes of an early diagnosis. I wondered why it hadn't happened yet, and I decided I was going to do this in honor of Hank.

While scanning the Internet, I also found information about "Rare

Senator Schaffer was appointed to the Ohio Senate in May 2019.

\*September-October, 2019 - Senate Bill 164 received hearings in front of the Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee, however, the bill does not advance past this point.

2020

In 2020 the pandemic hit and Hank's Bill was at a standstill.

2021

\*February 2, 2021 - "Hank's Law" reintroduced for 134<sup>th</sup> General Assembly as Senate Bill 43.

\*April 21, 2021 - Senate Bill 43 passed the Ohio Senate with a unanimous vote after being approved by the Senate Health Committee on March 3, 2021.

\*June 15, 2021 - Senate Bill 43 is passed out of the House Health Committee with a unanimous vote.

2022

\*June, 2021 - February, 2022 - Senate Bill 43 Informally passed on House Floor 14 times before being re-referred to House Rules and Reference Committee. The bill does not advance past this point.



The signing of Hank's Law. submitted

Disease Week" in Washington, D.C. It was hosted by the Rare Disease Legislative Advocates (a program of the EveryLife Foundation for Rare Diseases). This multi-day event brings together rare disease advocates from across the country to make their voices heard by their Members of Congress. I decided I was going to go and see what I could do to get a Sarcoma Awareness Month established.

I attended Rare Disease Week in Washington, D.C. in 2017 and 2018, but I didn't feel like I was getting anywhere at a national level. I decided I would come back to Ohio and see what I could do there to make a difference. I found out that Representative Tim Schaffer was the person I needed to reach out to.

After meeting with Representative Schaffer, I started to see change and the following things started happening:

2018

\*May 15, 2018 - First version of "Hank's Law" was introduced as House Bill 651.

\*June 28, 2018 - House Bill 651 passed House State and Local Government Committee, however, the bill did not advance past this point.

2019

\*March 5, 2019 - "Hank's Law" reintroduced for 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly in House by then State Representative Tim Schaffer.

\*June 17, 2019 - "Hank's Law" introduced at Senate Bill 164 after

2023

\*January 26, 2023 - "Hank's Law" reintroduced for 135<sup>th</sup> General Assembly as Senate Bill 34.

\*March 22, 2023 - Senate Bill 34 passed out of Senate Health Committee.

\*May 17, 2023 - Senate Bill 34 unanimously passed out of Ohio Senate.

\*October 12, 2023 - Senate Bill 34 passed out of House Public Health Policy Committee.

On November 15 (the anniversary week of losing Hank to sarcoma) I got a call from Senator Tim Schaffer to call him. It was a busy day and I just thought the call was about testifying for Hank's Bill again. Later that evening, I called Senator Schaffer back and I was surprised when he said he had good news. When I asked what it was, I was floored to find out that Hank's Bill had overwhelmingly passed out of the Ohio House of Representatives 93-1. My dream had finally come true for Hank. I couldn't believe it had finally happened!

Every day after, I waited for a phone call to find out when we would meet with Governor DeWine to sign "Hank's Law." Weeks went by and finally I got a phone call on December 12 from Senator Schaffer. He said I have good news and bad news. My heart dropped to the floor. I was afraid something had gone wrong with Hank's Bill. I told Senator Schaffer to give me the bad news first. He said that we couldn't have Hank's ceremony at the State House. I was so

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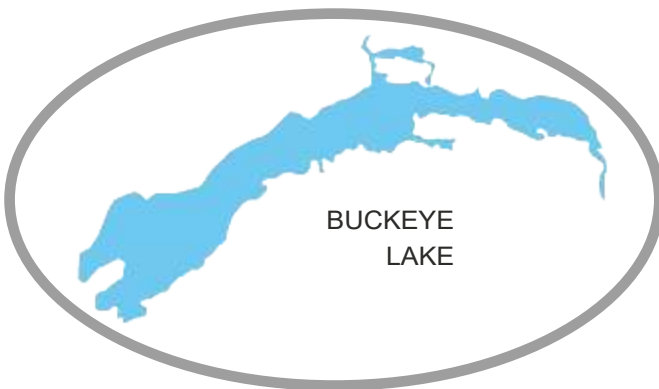
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# Around



# the Lake

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## Millersport Council Report

Village Council met on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, at 7:00 PM in the Municipal Building. In attendance were Mayor Gary Matheny, Council Members present were President Pro Tem Craig Cooperrider, Elizabeth Butler, Dustin Bidwell, Stephanie Helle and Rick Thompson. Also present were Village Zoning Administrator Bill Simpson, Fiscal Officer Susan A. Ramsey, Chase Wood Water Tech, John Wood, Water Superintendent, Park and Recreation Director Tom Nebbergall, Billing Clerk Sandy Lines, Village Administrator Vincent B. Popo and residents Sharon Johnson, Danielle Johnson and Drake Riley. Councilor James McKittrick was absent.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said.

Roll call was taken and Councilor James McKittrick was absent.

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Water:** Nearly Five Hundred Neptune radio read meters have been installed since October 1, 2023 and will be finished by the end of February 2024. Residents are being notified to set up appointments for the meter replacements.

There was a preconstruction meeting with the Righter Company who will be installing the iron filter. They will possibly begin by the end of 2023 or early 2024.

Southwest Licking has a permit to install a water line under Route 70 and provide water to the truck stop. If both parties agree, they will run the water line south to the Fairfield County line and the village will run a water line west along Route 79 to meet them. Southwest Licking sent a preliminary cost estimate.

Our insurance company reimbursed the village \$61,000.00 for the well pump that collapsed and fell 200 feet to the bottom of the well.

The American Legion building will be signed over to the village. Council will hold a meeting at the American Legion so everyone can see what the facilities looks like and what will need to be done for improvements.

**Police Department:** Chief Mark Consolo sent statistics for the month of October. The department issued (5) five traffic warning, (1) one traffic citation, (1) one dispatch run and (0) zero mutual aid runs and worked (110) One Hundred Ten hours.

Commissioner Jeff Fix asked to meet with council concerning the Fairfield County Land Use Plan. Mayor Matheny has a number of dates that are days the commissioner can schedule. The mayor will get back with Jeff Fix and pick a date that will start at 6:00 pm.

Councilor Beth Butler followed up to go over the steps needed to establish rules, guidelines, fees and 3% bed tax on short term rentals. The Lancaster City ordinance is one of the models we are looking to implement. After much discussion it was agreed to set a follow-up meeting to move forward on a Millersport Ordinance for bed tax and registration fees and then with the input from the residents of the Village of Millersport discuss effects.

**Fire Department:** Chief Robert Price sent the run totals for the month of October. Station 631 made (46) forty-six runs; Station 632

made (14) fourteen runs; Station 633 made (28) twenty-eight runs; and Walnut Township made (19) nineteen mutual aid runs.

**Ordinance 856:** is an ordinance authorizing temporary appropriations for 2024. This is the 1<sup>st</sup> Reading.

The Village of Millersport received a Nature Works Grant in the amount of \$19,152.00 to replace the old wooden swing sets.

Parking is closed at Miller's Park so holiday lights can be placed and the park can be decorated.

The Village of Millersport will be celebrating its Bicentennial in 2025. Plans are now being set to form a committee to plan the celebration. Residents that are interested in being part of this event should contact Vince Popo (614-562-7320).

\*A copy of the recorded Village of Millersport Council Meeting dated Tuesday November 14, 2023 is available upon request.

Village Council met on Tuesday, December 5, 2023, at 6:00 PM at the American Legion Building. In attendance were Mayor Gary Matheny, Council Members present were Elizabeth Butler, Dustin Bidwell and Rick Thompson. Also present were Village Zoning Administrator Bill Simpson, Village Administrator Vincent B. Popo, Grant Coordinator Tim Morris and residents Frank Martin, Kyle Butler, Tracey Conforti, Sherry Pymmer, newly elected Nicole Crosson and Drake Riley. Councilor Stephanie Helle, James McKittrick and Craig Cooperrider were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was said.

Roll call was taken and Councilor Stephanie Helle, James McKittrick and Craig Cooperrider were absent.

The only item on the agenda was open discussion of the proposed Walnut Township Land Plan monitored by Commissioner Jeff Fix.

Growth is coming to Central Ohio and we all know this and Fairfield County needs to be ready for this growth. Calls from businesses call Fairfield County

concerning places to live, building warehouses and commercial support groups. All of entities (Villages, Townships and the County) need to have a plan. This plan is a flexible document and hopefully will meet the growing needs. Preserve the land and protect the tax base. Tax overlays are a new concept that has a specific portion of land that can have higher taxes than existing neighborhood.

Agricultural, residential, commercial and Industrial area are identified and then feedback is requested from each area's population. The residents need to feel that their voice matters and why Fairfield County is trying to develop a plan. A document is supposed to be helpful and responsive to the needs of the people. Solar panel development has not been identified in the current plan and will/may be identified in the future.

Joint Economic Development (JED) is a concept that allows townships, school systems and villages to share in the wealth. This may be a tool that all three entities can utilize. Jeff Fix feels the Route 33 corridor will be the main area that will benefit from the growth.

Annexation is a real challenge for areas that have your utilities but not a village resident. Townships are sinking in size and villages are growing. Once all of the information is collected the county will pass the Fairfield County Land Usage Plan.

### Mayor Gary Matheny

Moved to a small town and knows growth is coming and wants the growth to be controlled. There is a 60 condo and 18 townhouse development is on 13 acres. This development is not going to bring families full time to the Millersport area. Short term rentals (Air b and b) have decreased the population of the village.

### Vince Popo, Village Administrator

The land Use Plan is a flexible document. Main concern is an interconnect because the Village of Millersport has no back up plan for water if something is to happen to our water production. Our fear with Southwest Water and Wastewater is that an interconnect with them will be that we are selling 300,000 gallons daily and not as an emergency connect and will cause long term wear and tear on our facility and not generate enough income to pay for upgrades and repairs. Schools, small municipalities and sometimes townships have an issue in that the loans are outliving the asset. Our water towers needed repaired and painted but we still had two loans from previous work that was done and it did not make financial sense to secure another loan. We are eliminating loans but then are penalized for not showing need and having lower water and sewer rates. The village is at the mercy of neighboring farmers and we will be ready when one sells the property.

### Dustin Bidwell, Councilor

Dustin has gone to school, live and coached in the area. He wants controlled growth between the village, school system and township. This concept would allow the best way forward for all of the institutions. There has been improvement but most of it has not been the type of visual improvement

Continues on page 5

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Millersport Council Report continues from page 4

that residents see (storm sewers, catch basins, and valve and line replacements). Dustin identified three areas that could potentially grow and was correct in two of them. The condo development (north in the village) on 13 acres and the area (south) around the fire station.

**Rick Thompson, Councilor**

Lifelong resident and coached at the school and both children graduated from Walnut Township (Millersport). Rick is a strong proponent of annexation to help pay for services especially police protection. Rick likes the small town atmosphere but realizes the need to have controlled growth.

**Beth Butler, Councilor**

Beth is the newest council member and one of the newest residents of the village. Moved here because of the smallness. Beth's concern is for the school system as well as the controlled growth. Beth's main question is how we do we go about this process because

there is no sources of information. How do we implement what is planned. Because of the Conforti, Butler, Brewster and Hannah families the village developed a plan for development that is being further tested by the Mallard Condo development.

**Fairfield County Staff**

Aundea Cordle, County Administrator; Jason Grubb, County Engineer's office; Josh Hilberry, Regional Planning Commission; Chad Lucht, Soil & Water Conservation District; Tony Vogel, Utilities Director and Anthony Iachini, Workforce & Economic Development Department.

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Rick Thompson and seconded by Councilor Beth Butler. All voted yes and the motion carried 3-0.

\*A copy of the recorded Village of Millersport Council Meeting dated Tuesday December 5, 2023 is available upon request.

Galleries collaborate to celebrate young artists



submitted

The Harbor Community Center, together with the Centofanti and Collins Modern Art Gallery, announce their winter exhibition celebrating the young artists from Walnut Township School District in Millersport.

"The art submitted to our exhibition highlights the talent quietly surrounding our lake and farmland. It is with great excitement that we can collaborate to honor these young people," says Joy Pratt, artist and curator at The Harbor Community Center.

"There is remarkable talent amongst the students of all three counties surrounding the lake and we want to foster their desire to create by honoring them through these events," explained Angela Centofanti, owner and public relations director for artists of Centofanti and Collins Modern Art Gallery.

The Harbor Community Center welcomes the public to visit the gallery weekdays from 9:00 - 2:00 through February 10, 2024, at 5312 Walnut Rd., Buckeye Lake, Ohio 43008. A public reception is planned for the exhibition on January 13 from 1:00 - 3:00 and during Winterfest on Saturday, January 27. Please call the Harbor at 614-702-8290 for more information.

The gallery's partnership will highlight the growing art community in the Buckeye Lake Area and hopes to gain regional attention to the artists through ongoing promotion of the prolific artists at the lake.



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TOWNE CRIER - Fairfield Edition

Page 5

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## Local woodworker partners with Pleasantville Elementary PTO for successful fundraiser



(L-R): Lydia Tokarz - Pleasantville Elementary Principal, Abbey Bolin - 1st Grade Teacher, Nolen Mccafferty – owner, WoodWork 740. submitted

In a heartwarming collaboration, Pleasantville Elementary's Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) recently teamed up with local woodworking artisan from WoodWork 740 for a unique fundraiser that left the community buzzing with excitement.

The fundraiser, centered around custom laser-engraved drink tumblers, showcased the craftsmanship of WoodWork 740, who crafted five distinct designs. What set this initiative apart was the inclusion of all three school colors and various sizes, ensuring a personalized touch for every supporter.

Parents, teachers, and community members rallied behind the cause, resulting in a staggering order of over \$2500 worth of these beautifully crafted tumblers. The success of the campaign was not only a testament to the quality of WoodWork 740's

creations but also to the strong sense of community in the Fairfield Union LSD.

WoodWork 740 went above and beyond by generously contributing 25% of the sales

directly to the PTO. This gesture translated into a substantial financial boost for Pleasantville Elementary, with over \$500 raised to support various educational initiatives and school programs.

The collaboration exemplified the power of local businesses and community members coming together to support education. The PTO expressed gratitude for the overwhelming response and emphasized the positive impact the funds would have on enhancing the educational experience for Pleasantville Elementary students.

As the holiday season unfolded, the engraved tumblers served not only as practical, stylish items but also as tokens of community unity and shared commitment to fostering a thriving learning environment at Pleasantville Elementary. The success of this fundraiser is a shining example of how creative partnerships can make a lasting impact on our local schools.

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## An open letter to the residents of Fairfield County

Dear Animal Lover,

Wow, where has 2023 gone? Although I have always been warned that time moves faster the older you get I don't think that has been more obvious than this year. Is it because you are older, is it because you are busier, or is it that time really does fly when you are having fun? I have concluded that 2023 has checked all those boxes. With that said let me get right to the point. The Fairfield Area Humane Society needs your support as we continue to save, improve and forever change the lives of thousands of animals and people each year. 2023 has brought us huge wins as an organization with the addition of our Mobile Unit, our first Beat-the-Heat Spay-a-Thon where we fixed 280 cats in one day, and another record year for our on-site Vet Clinic. I threw together some numbers to wrap your head around. These may be a little random, but I hope they give a little glimpse into how busy we are and how important we are to the communities that we serve.

- Nearly 100 phone calls per day
- Almost 5,000 vet appointments
- Over 1,000 adoptions
- Over 3,000 pet spay/neuters
- Over 3,000 walk in nail trims
- Over 800 community cats TNR'd

As I was typing out those stats it hit me... time flies when you are busy having fun helping those in need. With our mission to Connect Animals & Community



through Rescue, Adoption & Education in full throttle there is no time to waste. Big plans are already in the works for 2024 with more expansion. A new 3,200 square foot multi-use building for much needed storage, our monthly spay/neuter clinics and dog training classes is Phase I. That will make possible a brand new Cat Wing for Phase 2! We are grateful to have those projects on our agenda due to the thoughtful giving of donors through our Legacy Endowment Group (L.E.G.) and so many more. My hope is to have you join us in helping to save lives through this request for support. Please consider the donor application on the back cover of this Towne Crier with our new giving levels showing what your donation helps us to accomplish. The Fairfield Area Humane Society is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 organization where your support is greatly appreciated and tax deductible.

Please see Donor Application on the back cover of this issue.

Sincerely,  
Corey Schoonover  
Executive Director

## Fairfield Federal employees celebrate holiday season by giving back to community causes



Fairfield Federal employees volunteering on Habitat for Humanity's 150th home build. submitted

LANCASTER, Ohio – Fairfield Federal employees are pleased to celebrate the holiday season with several philanthropic involvements to support local organizations and causes. The Association dedicates its time and resources to allow employees to be involved in numerous causes that are special to them during the holiday season.

"We are fortunate to have both, a team who is inspired by giving back and a community with so many great opportunities to volunteer, donate, fundraise and contribute," said Mary K. Snider, President and CEO of Fairfield Federal. "We prioritize giving back year-round, but the holidays are a special time for our team to leave a positive impact on our community and fuel us with inspiration for the year ahead."

End-of-year initiatives began with Fairfield Federal's annual Columbus Day Random Acts of Kindness event, where the entire staff divided into small groups to support more than 15 local organizations of their choosing. Team members also completed numerous additional acts of kindness, such as handing out gift cards at grocery stores, gas stations and restaurants, and delivering treats to local nonprofits. A team of employees also volunteered for a day on Habitat for Humanity's 150th home build and paired up with Fairfield Christian Academy to become a community connection partner



Fairfield Federal employees dropping off Thanksgiving goody bags to Fairfield Christian Academy students. submitted



Fairfield Federal presents donation to Fairfield Community Action. submitted



Fairfield Federal employees during Columbus Day Random Acts of Kindness. submitted



Fairfield Federal's Main Office holiday tree to be donated to a local organization. submitted

with a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class. The staff enjoyed assembling and delivering Thanksgiving goody bags to the students. Fairfield Federal recently completed a Stuff-A-Trolley food drive for the Community Action Food Pantry, and planted and decorated holiday trees to be donated and replanted at the Lancaster American Le-

gion, Lancaster Dog Park and Pickerington Dog Park.

For more information about Fairfield Federal, visit [www.fairfieldfederal.com](http://www.fairfieldfederal.com). Follow @Fairfield.Federal.Savings.and.Loan on Facebook to stay up-to-date on the organization's commitment to community.

Read the Towne Crier online at [www.fairfieldtownecrier.com](http://www.fairfieldtownecrier.com)

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# Fairfield County Economic Update addresses inevitable growth



One of the speakers at the event, John Sherwood, Talent Strategy Director at JobsOhio. submitted

Lancaster, Ohio – Nearly 200 community members, business leaders, and elected officials gathered on December 8th for the annual Economic Update presented by the Fairfield 33 Development Alliance in partnership with local Chambers of Commerce. The session included guest speakers from Google, JobsOhio and the Columbus Partnership who spoke about the rapid growth of Fairfield County and how best to meet the needs that accompany it.

“In the most recent report from the Site Selectors Guild, a group of experts who work with companies to determine where those companies will expand and place their businesses, it was indicated that skilled workforce availability is three times more important for business location decisions than any incentives,” said John Sherwood, Director, Talent Strategy for JobsOhio. He acknowledged that Fairfield County’s Workforce Center was the ideal way to address workforce development, referring to it as bold, creative and strategic.

“Across the western world we are in a time of real industrial resurgence and there is huge opportunity for Ohio and the Midwest to succeed – specifically in that industrial development,” Sherwood said. “And quite honestly, the communities that have the best skilled workforce, engineers, technicians, and skilled operators are the ones that are going to flourish the most.”

The growth throughout central Ohio currently accounts for 90% of the overall growth in Ohio over the past decade. Kenny McDonald, CEO of the Columbus Partnership, says that the area is

quickly becoming the poster child for bringing industries such as pharmaceuticals and manufacturing back to the United States after learning during the pandemic that not producing goods in the US placed the entire country in a precarious position.

“We are about to have one of the largest solar assembly facilities in North America and over time, we will probably have the largest chip-making plant in the country,” he said. “We have Honda and LG and the batteries that are being recycled right here in Fairfield County. Most of the manufacturers in the world are trying to be inside the boundaries of the United States – best country in the world, best place to do business, best marketing over the long term - and they’re coming to our market.”

Tony Burkhart, Economic Development Expert for Google, said central Ohio is one of Google’s fastest-growing regions in its global fleet, with three separate campuses in the same metro area.

“This area is unique,” he said. “Google is using Ohio as a pilot site for the new AI and Machine Learning deployments and the

New Albany campus is hosting the SpaceX Starlink Ground Terminal Network. We have developed great relationships in this area, including many of the people from Fairfield County.”

While the growth is exciting, local officials recognize that needs, such as affordable housing, will continue to be of utmost importance.

“We want to make sure we are

ready for the growth that is coming to Fairfield County,” said Rick Szabrak, Fairfield County Economic and Workforce Development Director. “We continue to pull resources from thought leaders, business owners, developers and elected officials, as well as our community members, as we prepare for a future that is bright.”

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## Judith M. Root retires from Fairfield Federal Board of Directors after 50 years of service, Association dedicates community room in Root’s honor



(photo, left) Matt Wideman, Executive Vice President of Fairfield Federal, presents the Judith M. Root Community Room with Judy Root. submitted

LANCASTER, Ohio – Judith M. (Judy) Root has announced her retirement from Fairfield Federal’s Board of Directors following a 50-year career with the Association. In honor and recognition of her outstanding commitment to Fairfield Federal and her passion for serving the community, Fairfield Federal has dedicated its conference room in the Main Office building in Judy’s honor and invites the community to use this space. Root will continue to serve as an advisory director following her retirement from the Board.

Root’s career began in 1973 as a teller. She went on to become the Vice President of Savings Operations in 1994, Executive Vice President in 2004 and President in 2010. Root retired from full-time employment in May 2018 and continued as a member of the Association’s Board of Directors until her present retirement.

“It is challenging to put Judy’s impact and our appreciation for her service into words. Her contributions are immeasurable to the Association, our customers and our community,” said Mary Snider, President of Fairfield Federal. “We wish her all the best in this well-deserved retirement and are pleased to have her continue to serve in an advisory role on the Board.”

During Root’s career, the Association brought its accounts “online,” endured the Savings and Loan Crisis of the 1980s, and introduced ATMs, internet banking and a mobile app to its depositors. As President, Root successfully led the Association through the Great Recession of 2008-2009.

In addition to a successful career at Fairfield Federal, Root is deeply involved in the local community. She has served on the boards of Habitat for Humanity, the Fairfield County Foundation, the Ohio University Lancaster Coordinating Council and Lancaster Festival. She is a member and past President of the Lancaster Rotary Club. She and her husband Steve have hosted over 20 Rotary exchange students from all over the world. Root was honored with the Athena Award in 2007 and the Floyd Wolfe Community Service Award in 2019 by the Lancaster Fairfield County Chamber of Commerce.

Following Root’s retirement, a new Director on the Association’s Board will be elected in early 2024. For more information about Fairfield Federal, visit [www.fairfieldfederal.com](http://www.fairfieldfederal.com). Follow @Fairfield.Federal.Savings.and.Loan on Facebook to stay up to date on the organization’s commitment to the community.

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## Road Worker Position

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## State opioid stimulant funds

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine recently announced a \$100 million investment of federal State Opioid and Stimulant Response (SOS, formerly SOR) funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration to help communities fight opioid addiction and prevent overdose deaths.

The funds are a continuation of year one funding received by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) that will strengthen and sustain an array of prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and long-term recovery supports for Ohioans struggling with an opioid or stimulant use disorder. More than 7,800 Ohioans were served in year one of the SOS initiative.

"Ohio continues to make good progress in our effort to stem the tide of opioid addiction, but our work is far from over," said Governor Mike DeWine. "While the rate of unintentional overdose deaths is slowing, our work must continue. This funding will help us save lives and promote stronger, healthier communities."

More than \$58.7 million of the \$100 million will be channeled to Ohio's 50 county Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) boards to expand access to local prevention, harm reduction, treatment and recovery supports. Another \$16.6 million will be designated for



direct-funded community initiatives. OhioMHAS will also use these funds to partner with the Ohio Department of Health to provide funding to purchase additional supplies of the overdose reversal drug naloxone, and the Ohio Department of Veteran Services to provide services for veterans and active-duty service members, including the expansion of peer recovery support services for residents at the ODVS Domiciliary who have a history of opioid use disorder, stimulant use disorder, and/or co-occurring disorders.

OhioMHAS coordinated with statewide partners, state level agencies, and Governor Mike DeWine's RecoveryOhio initiative to identify Ohio's goals for the SOS initiative. Key priorities include:

- Reducing unintentional overdose deaths
- Increasing access to addiction treatment
- Preventing youth alcohol and drug use
- Increasing recovery supports
- Supporting responsible prescribing practices
- Promoting harm reduction

practices

The Fairfield ADAMH Board's plan to utilize the funding is to provide outpatient treatment for individuals with opiate and/or stimulant use disorders. At risk pregnant and new moms with opioid or stimulant use disorder will receive outreach and engagement, coordination, treatment, and recovery supports through the CARE Program for pregnant and new moms. Pregnant and new moms experiencing substance use disorders may also receive care coordination through the Family and Children First Council's perinatal program. Another treatment service provides expanded services through The Recovery Center's medication-assisted treatment to support evidence-based medication and counseling services. Programming for the criminal justice population includes assessment, peer support and linkage from within the jail that supports engagement in treatment upon release as well as connections with community support and case management upon release. New Horizons Mental Health Services and Lancaster Recovery Services provide these important treatment and recovery support services. In addition, the grant allows for financial coaching from, Right Path Financial Coaching.

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## LEGAL NOTICE

The Village of Thurston has completed the 2023 annual financial report and it is available for review. Any person who would like to review the report can contact the village office at 740-862-6003 to set up a time. The report is also available online at [www.thurstonohio.com](http://www.thurstonohio.com).

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## Local food pantries receive \$50,000 from Fairfield County Foundation

LANCASTER, Ohio – The Fairfield County Foundation is pleased to announce that we were able to provide grants totaling \$50,000 to 15 local food pantries in advance of the holiday season.

Donations were distributed to the following food pantries: Baltimore Food Pantry, Bremen Food Pantry, Canal Winchester Human Services, Connexion West (Victory Center Food Pantry), First United

Methodist/Community Kitchen, Foundation Dinners, Lancaster-Fairfield Community Action Agency Food Pantry, Lancaster Vineyard Food Pantry, Lutheran Social Services Food Pantry, Maywood Mission, Pickerington Food Pantry, Rushville Community Food Pantry, Salvation Army, Shalom UMC Pantry Mission/Bloom Carroll, and St. Vincent de Paul of Lancaster.

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\*US Internal Revenue Code Sec. 25(D) effective Jan. 1, 2021, for heating a residence. For more details visit CentralBoiler.com. Information provided here as a convenience and may not be relied upon as substitute for professional tax advice. Consult a tax professional with any questions.  
\*\*EPA cord wood Hydronic Heater list 1-28-2022




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