

—Progress 2016—

DELAWARE PRIDE

a special edition of

The Delaware
Gazette

The Sunbury News

2016 Delaware County Fair promises to provide plenty of excitement

By Ben Stroup
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If you've been to the Delaware County Fair sometime in the last several years, go ahead and give yourself a pat on the back ... you're part of what makes it great.

"The people and the support of the community (make the fair great)," newly-appointed Delaware County Fair general manager Sandy Kuhn said. "That includes our junior fair exhibitors, 4-H and FFA advisers, horse racing enthusiasts — owners, trainers, groomers and fans — our vendors, our employees and everyone who comes to enjoy the fair."

The fair has been a hit in recent years, with attendance averages around 165,000 for the eight-day event with better than 40,000 pouring in for the Little Brown Jug, a showcase dubbed "The Great American Harness Race."

Wiggle It Jiggle It won last year's \$677,000 Little Brown Jug presented by Fazole's, beating Lost For Words by a nose.

The two gave the fans one of the most epic battles in the 70-year history of the LBJ. With the 46,721 in attendance on their feet, Wiggle It Jiggle It and Lost For Words paced down the lane nose-to-nose with Wiggle It Jiggle It getting the final call in 1:49 3/5, equaling the stakes mark he set in the second elimination.

This year's Jug is slated for Thursday, Sept. 22. As for the rest of the week



Ben Stroup | The Gazette

Wiggle It Jiggle It, driven by Montrell Teague on the outside, edged Lost For Words (2) to win what was one of the most epic battles in the 70-year history of the Little Brown Jug last year at the Delaware County Fair.

(Sept. 17-24), there will be plenty of other things going on — things involving a different kind of horsepower.

"Planning is going well," Kuhn said. "One of the changes for this year will be an expanded motor sports area with events every evening except Jug day. There will be a modified standard farm tractor pull in addition to the mini modified tractor pull this year."

But wait, there's more.

Junior fair shows and exhibits, The

Wolfe Brothers (Australia's No. 1 country band), strolling acts, local acts on the WDLR stage, Phil Dirt and the Dozers and fireworks on the last night of the fair will complement the excitement of the motor sports and world-class harness racing. The fair will host somewhere in the neighborhood of 120 indoor and 200 outdoor vendors.

"We also have over 1,400 youth involved in 4-H, FFA and scouts in the county," Kuhn said.

And don't forget about the All Horse Parade, which is scheduled for the Sunday immediately preceding the fair's opening weekend. The horses, ponies, wagons, carriages and even cowgirls and marching bands will exit the fairground's main gate and strut around downtown at 3 p.m. The parade route is about three miles.

As much as the fair has to offer, thanks to the recent passing of a hotel bed tax, the best could be yet to come.

"With the passing of the bed tax, it opens a lot of possibilities for improving the infrastructure and buildings as well as adding additional multi-purpose buildings," Kuhn said. "This will go a long way in improving the fairgoers' experience. The more people we can get introduced to our fair, horse racing and the excitement of all the fair offers, the more people will make attending the Delaware County Fair an annual event."

"Before the 2016 fair, there will be limited funds available to make improvements as the tax just went into effect May 6. We will continue to get all of our buildings up to code (installing panic doors, exit lights, etc.) and hopefully guests will see some improvements in the current restroom facilities. As we get a better determination of funds available, the board will begin the planning process for the next five years on how to improve current infrastructure and buildings and explore potential new buildings."

Follow Ben Stroup on Twitter @delgazette_ben.

Delaware County tops in many categories

By Michael Rich
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Delaware County is a great place to live. And there's statistical data to back that statement.

Delaware County is the fastest growing county in the state of Ohio with an unemployment rate that is one of the lowest. If that weren't enough, it's also the healthiest county in the state and one of the happiest counties to live in the country.

"It is a relatively young population that's growing," county commissioner Jeff Benton said. "People want to move here with their families — raise their families here. We've got great school systems. Olentangy, in particular, is one of the top few school systems in the state consistently."

No county in Ohio is growing as fast as Delaware County, according to a recent report by the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission.

The county's population is estimated at 198,650 and is projected to hit the 200,000 mark next year, which makes it the 22nd fastest growing county in the country at a rate of 13.96 percent, compared to the national average of 9.71.

The highest growth area is 62 percent between the I-270

beltway and the city of Delaware, according to the report.

"There's just a lot of nice communities — Delaware city is a great community," Benton said. "Delaware city is growing very steadily; downtown is very vibrant. Powell is growing very nicely ... same with Westerville."

Ostrander (37 percent), Berkshire Township (31 percent), the village of Galena (20 percent) and the village of Sunbury (17 percent) have all seen rapid growth.

The East region — Sunbury and Galena — is growing nicely. "There's a lot of very proud eastern Delaware County folks that love that community and it's doing very well economically," Benton said.

Delaware County also has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state, 3.3 percent as of May, according to the bureau of labor statistics — tied with Putnam and Auglaize, trailing only Mercer (2.9 percent) and Holmes (3.2 percent).

"The Tanger mall just opened up and that's been a huge success and IKEA is coming to Polaris. Delaware city has a lot of diverse businesses that are doing very

See DELAWARE | 2



The Strand Theatre around the time of its opening in 1916.

Courtesy photo

100 years later, Strand still going strong

Morgyn Cooper
For The Gazette

Since it was opened 1916, The Strand Theatre has been a strong influence to the culture of the Delaware community.

The decades have added to its character and ambiance, and as one of the oldest theaters in the country, it's certainly a big part of the town's history.

"The Strand Theatre is a tangible link

to Delaware's past and history," said Delaware County Treasurer Jon Peterson. "Many landmarks in Delaware, through the years, have been destroyed. It is a comfort that this stoic reminder of yesterday still stands to greet moviegoers today just as it has for so many decades."

The theater recently celebrated its 100th anniversary and, as if in celebra-

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New courthouse to be ready next June

By Michael Rich
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It's never easy to construct a building – especially one of the government variety. The new Delaware County courthouse has seen its share of difficulties, even in the past couple of years as plans were finalized, revised and the budget bounced around like a piñata.

But, throughout all the struggle and the back and forth between the city and the county over parking and design, the 94,450 square-foot courthouse is still scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2017.

“Working with the city council on the various issues – it's been a positive experience with all of us. I think everybody very, very pleased with the result,” county commissioner Gary Merrell said.

The new \$38 million courthouse on North Sandusky will house the Delaware County Common Pleas Court and the new domestic relations division, the Delaware County Clerk of Courts, Adult Court Services, the public defenders office, and Adult Probation Authority.

Common Pleas Judge David Gormley said the building will hopefully address many of the issues at the current county courthouse located at 91 N. Sandusky St., including frequent electrical circuit overloads and many rooms that do not regulate temperature efficiently.

Gormley added the biggest issues with the current courthouse is the flow of foot traffic. Gormley explained that since there is only one door and one elevator, the families of suspects, the families of victims, jurors, attorneys, and the defendants themselves all have to take the same path out of the building.

The new courthouse will give the county space to add a new domestic relations judge, who is slated to start Jan. 1.

“We need to add a judge – we're very limited with the space we have at the old courthouse,” Merrell said.

The five-story building has two levels of underground parking. The first level is for staff and the second level is for staff and in-custody defendant delivery.

The Clerk of Courts office will be located on the third level, which will also have grand jury space, adult court services and adult parole.

The fourth level will be domestic relations courts with hearing rooms and mediation spaces and fifth level will



The new courthouse is still scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2017.

Michael Rich | For The Gazette

house common pleas courtrooms and judge's chambers.

All five stories will be equipped with in-custody defendant holding areas for security purposes.

Security is a much-needed upgrade and a major reason that a new courthouse was needed.

“We have to meet the modern standards for courthouse security,” said Jon Melvin, interim director of facilities for Delaware County. “Right now, everyone shares the same entrance for the courthouse – prisoners, judges, public all enters through the same door.”

The recent labor shortage upped the budget from just over \$38 million to about \$38.6 million.

Gary Rutledge, vice president of Lend Lease Inc., told the Delaware County Commission July 18 that timing was a factor because of the marketplace.

He said that older laborers were retiring and the industry is having trouble replacing them with younger people.

Still, Lend Lease is committed to completing the project by June 30,

2017, according to Rutledge.

The city and the county struggled over the design because the city wanted the new building to match the historical buildings in the area, especially after the Elks Lodge, built in the 1880s, was razed to make room for the new courthouse.

“That building was purchased long before the current commissioners were involved and it sat there idle for a number of years and the building was just beyond, really, repair and functional use,” Merrell said.

“As we went through the process of evaluating it and we went through the process of involving everybody, it was consensus belief that it was an accurate assessment, which led us to remove the building. We're going to have a courthouse that we're all going very proud of.”

The budget jumped to just over \$38 million from about \$35 million in March after commissioners unanimously voted to increase the square footage, at least in part, to allow for domestic relations

court and to allow for future growth.

This came two months after design changes had to be approved by the city of Delaware's Historical Preservation Commission to reduce the budget after it had ballooned to over \$39 million.

A clock tower was eliminated, some windows were eliminated and the material for the lower level parking garages were changed from brick to concrete to save some money.

Parking was another issue that caused friction between the city and the county. The city wanted some of the garage space to be open to the public, but security is a concern.

“My view is that the parking within and adjacent to the courthouse, because of security, will be limited to employees and perhaps guests of the county,” Merrell said. “What is created out of this is that it opens up service parking that would typically be taken by employees, will be made available for those visiting the city. It's a win-win for everyone.”

Follow Michael Rich on Twitter @mrichdelgazette. Glenn Battishill also contributed to this report.

GLENNWOOD

C O M M O N S

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On US 36/37 between SR 521 & Glenn Rd.

JUSTICE

Changes ahead for county courts

By Glenn Battishill
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The past five years have brought on substantial changes for the court system in Delaware County, including changes in judge-ships, new buildings and the rise of opioid-related crime.

Five years ago, Duncan Whitney and Everett Krueger oversaw the Delaware County Common Pleas Court, along with Kenneth Spicer, who presided over the Juvenile and Probate Division. Since then, both Whitney and Spicer have retired and been replaced by David Gormley and David Hejmanowski, respectively.

Gormley was serving as a Delaware Municipal Court judge when he ran for election as common pleas judge in 2014 and has been replaced at the municipal court by Marianne Hemmeter, who was appointed to the position. Hemmeter had served in the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office and the Ohio Attorney General's Office prior to her appointment.

The largest change for the court system will be the new judicial center that is under construction on North Sandusky Street next to the Hayes Building. The new \$38 million judicial center will house the common pleas court criminal and domestic division, the clerk of courts, the public defender offices and others when it opens in June of next year.

In terms of trends, Gormley and Hejmanowski both said there has been a large rise in opioid-related cases.

"We are certainly seeing a lot more opiate-related



Hejmanowski



Gormley

criminal cases," Gormley said. "The vast majority of criminal cases have to do with it. It's had a tremendous effect on scheduling."

For Hejmanowski and the juvenile division, opiates have been appearing more and more in parenting and custody-related cases.

Hejmanowski said there hasn't been a big spike in crime in the past five years but, instead, a steady growth as the county continues to grow in population.

"There's just more people," Hejmanowski said. "It's One-fifth more of everything."

In addition to the new court building, there will also be a new judge: Randall Fuller, who will preside over the county's first domestic relations court.

Fuller hasn't technically been elected to the position but is running unopposed in the November election. Fuller will hear cases regarding matters including divorce, separations, dissolutions, child support, visitation and annulments.

Gormley and Hejmanowski both agree that the new court will help to ease the caseload for the other courts.

Looking ahead, Gormley is running for a judgeship with the Fifth District Court of Appeals and, if he is successful, he will be leaving his county position at the start of 2017. Gormley said the governor will appoint a judge to replace him in the common pleas court seat.

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Delaware

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well," Benton said. "There's a lot good-paying jobs. We're not dependent on any one employer or industry."

The Delaware County unemployment rate is far lower than the state rate of 4.6 percent and the national rate of 4.5 percent.

Delaware County is also the healthiest in Ohio for the second year in a row, according to the 2016 County Health Rankings released in March.

The rankings are based on the criteria of nine categories – adult smoking, adult obesity, food environment, physical inactivity, access to exercise opportunities, excessive drinking, alcohol-impaired driving deaths, sexually transmitted infections and teen births.

Delaware County led the state in clinical care, including the lowest rate of uninsured persons, and remained first in the state in social and economic factors.

"We've got a good support system – a lot of our communities support themselves very well – support those who need support through organizations like People in Need and SourcePoint," Benton said. "SourcePoint is a fabulous organization for seniors in Delaware County and very popular."

Delaware County is still one of the happiest places to live in America, according to a study done by personal finance technology company SmartAsset.

SmartAsset updates the happiest counties to live in America yearly – naming Delaware the 11th happiest county in 2016, a year after coming in second place.

The study, which measures counties with a population of more than 50,000, uses eight factors – unemployment, poverty, marriage, bankruptcy, physical activity and divorce rates as well as life expectancy and the ratio of median income to living wage – to determine the overall index.

Delaware's overall index of 94.81 was 0.04 behind Ozaukee, Wisconsin, for 10th place after finishing with an index of 97.41 last year.

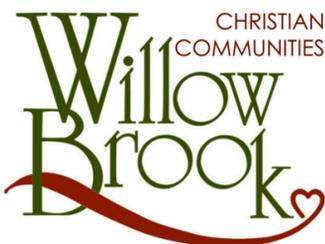
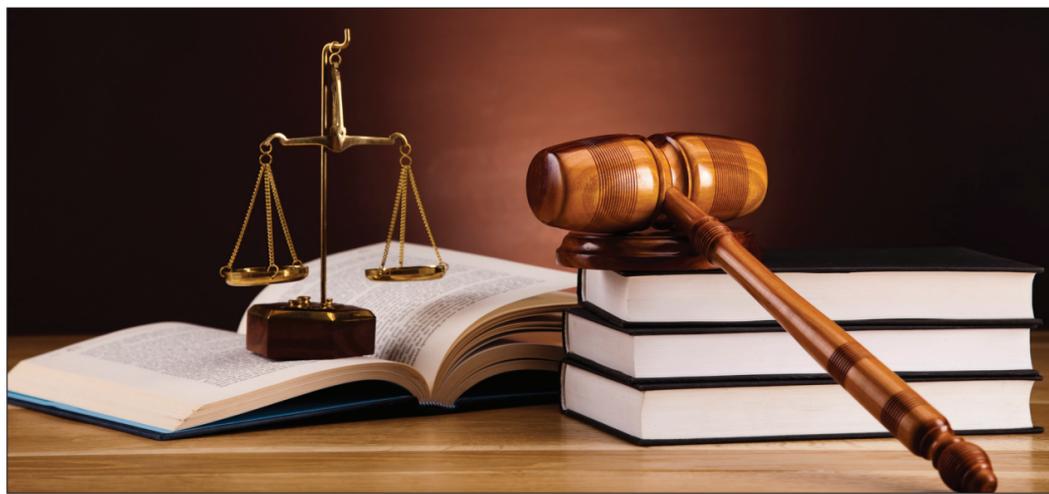
That doesn't mean that Delaware isn't as happy as it was last year. The unemployment rate is 3.8 percent, down from 4.4 percent in the 2015 study and the bankruptcy rate is 0.20 percent down from 0.21 percent last year, while the poverty rate, life expectancy and physical activity rates remained the same.

The only change was the marriage rate fell to 63.5 percent from 64.2 percent.

The rankings were presented by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute and are available online at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

"On so many fronts, it's just such a neat place," Benton said. "I like to say it's a great place to live, work and play."

Follow Michael Rich on Twitter @mrichdelazette.



Assisted Living at Willow Brook:

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- Rated among the top of the state in resident and family satisfaction.
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and the trend continues . . .

- The chefs at Willow Brook Christian Home took top honors in two categories in the Taste of Worthington competition in July. That makes eight top spots in the last 11 years.
- So far this year every Willow Brook health care center that has been inspected by the Ohio Department of Health has received a perfect nursing score.
- Once again this year both of Willow Brook's skilled nursing and rehabilitation centers have received 5-star ratings (the best) from Medicare Compare on its website medicare.com, the only Delaware County facility to gain that quality distinction.

Willow Brook at Delaware Run

100 Delaware Crossing W - US36/West William St

740-201-5640

Willow Brook Christian Village

100 Willow Brook Way S - off US 23

740-369-0048

Willow Brook Christian Home

55 Lazelle Road - Columbus/Worthington

614-885-3300

Growth affects County economic development plan

By D. Anthony Botkin
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Delaware County's current population is estimated at 198,650 and projected to hit 200,000 within the next year, according to a recent report from the Delaware County Regional Planning Commission.

"By 2050, the (central Ohio) population will be 500,000 to a million," said Bob Lamb, economic development director for Delaware County. "Rate of growth for the county is around 3 percent, approximately 9,000 people per year move into the county."

Lamb said Delaware County remains the fastest growing county in Ohio.

"People are drawn here because of the great quality of life, the close proximity to Columbus, the great schools and the large employers," he said. "We are really well positioned to offer a diverse amount of options."

"Powell, Sunbury, Delaware, Westerville and Dublin are listed as five of the top cities for growth in central Ohio," Lamb said. "You're going to see various pockets of growth over the next decade."

Lamb and his team have been engaging the public with meetings and a survey over the past several months for input into the county's economic development plan.

Once southern Delaware County growth fills in, Lamb predicts the growth will move north in the county.

"We are cognizant to the fact there are residents in the county that love the rural nature," Lamb said. "We want to make sure that we are keeping that in our



Lamb

minds as we create the plan."

According to Lamb, the bottom line for "economic growth is addressing the needs of the community."

"To ensure we achieve economic prosperity in the next decade and beyond, we are creating a strategic economic development plan that outlines a vision, goals and objectives for the entire county," Lamb said. "Public input is a critical piece of our planning process."

"The strategic plan kicked off in January," Lamb said. "We've reached almost 1,000 stakeholders within the county."

Lamb said the county's survey shows schools are rated the highest in priority for residents of the county. "One of the number one drivers for this county is schools," he said. "We're the most educated county in the state and about three times the national average."

Lamb also attributes the low unemployment rate of the county to the fact that 60 percent of the county's residents have a college degree or some sort of higher education.

Delaware County's unemployment rate remains among the lowest in Ohio, according to the state's latest job report.

"It speaks well of the schools we have in the county and why you see so much support for the schools," Lamb said. "We have phenomenal schools in this county."

The survey revealed that other priorities residents feel to be high in the economic development of the county are roads, sewers and water, gas and fiber optic capabilities for both commercial businesses, and

high-end housing developments.

"We're going to make sure all the services are available to make us competitive," Lamb said. "We need to make smart investments."

Lamb said millennials who don't want to live in downtown Columbus are moving to Delaware County. "I think diversification in housing is so critical for the long-term economic viability of the county," Lamb said. "As we grow in population, we'll be in position for those types of things."

Lamb said, "Eighty percent of our workforce flows south to Columbus going to work every day."

Lamb pointed out that commuters travel 82 minutes both ways for work, instead of spending it with their families. "If jobs move up to here, then that goes away," Lamb said.

To be able to attract businesses that will bring in higher-wage jobs, Lamb said, "It's getting out in front of businesses and letting them know that we are here and open for business."

The key is to remove "red-flag issues" that keep businesses from expansion and staying in the area, he said. Many companies have operations around the country, making the competition to attract businesses national and international.

"We are working with our existing companies in our community," he said, "making sure when they choose where their next investment is going to be in that company, they pick our community. We want to make sure they are picking Delaware County for that investment."

D. Anthony Botkin may be reached at 740-0902 or on Twitter @dabotkin

Speech and Hearing Center serves all ages

Submitted Report

The Delaware Speech and Hearing Center supports communication for a lifetime! We are a nonprofit agency that has been serving the Delaware County community and surrounding areas since 1959.

We provide caring, high quality, professional and individualized services to improve your communication skills. We assess, evaluate and treat individuals of all ages at affordable rates and accept all forms of insurance.

If you feel like you're missing



Delaware Speech and Hearing Center

COMMUNICATION FOR A LIFETIME

The Delaware Speech and Hearing Center's new logo, introduced in July

parts of conversations, please call us for a hearing test at no cost to you! Hearing aid fittings with individual verification are provided. An extended service plan and educational workshops are available after purchase of a hearing aid. We

own a large stock of demonstration and loaner hearing aids. Hearing protection devices for musicians and hunters are also available.

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Delaware Speech and Hearing Center has offices in Delaware and Powell.

To schedule an appointment, please contact us via phone at 740-369-3650 or email at

contact@delawareshc.org. To learn more about our services and programs, please visit www.delawareshc.org.

Information for this story was provided by the Delaware Speech and Hearing Center.



Courtesy photo

The Delaware Speech and Hearing Center assesses, evaluates and treats individuals of all ages



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Creative Foundations provides the opportunity for adults with developmental disabilities to enhance their lives through the arts and community integration. We also serve the whole person by incorporating the creative arts, paid work, education, employment skills training, and independent living in a total synthesis. The art studio is a place filled with light and color, where artists come to freely express themselves using a variety of media — reaching artistic achievement, personal growth, self-reliance, and self-esteem through the creative process. Step into our new store—it is AMAZING!—Monday through Friday, 10am until 3pm, while our artists are in the gallery.

PEOPLE



Lori, an artist at Creative Foundations, is busy at work.

Courtesy photo

No limits for artists at Creative Foundations

Submitted Report

Located in the heart of downtown Delaware, at 57 N. Sandusky St., Creative Foundations provides the opportunity for adults with developmental disabilities to enhance their lives through the arts and community integration.

Our program promotes creativity and independence. We also serve the whole person by incorporating the creative arts, paid work, education, employment skills training and independent living in a total synthesis.

At Creative Foundations, there is no limit to the level of the expressive accomplishment any person can achieve! The art created here is uninhibited, authentic and inspiring! The art studio is a place filled with light and color, where artists come to freely express themselves using a variety of media – reaching artistic achievement, person growth, self-reliance and self-esteem through the creative process.

Step into our new store – it is AMAZING! A collaboration of exclusive items and our artists' art are woven throughout – mingling with an urban

collection of hand-made creations and distinctive brand-name products that contribute to making downtown shopping fun and exciting!

Bring in a picture of your pet and have one of our talented artists create a customized pet portrait – brimming with personality! Come fill your lives with all things fun and unique at our new store!

Stop in and see us Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. while our artists are in the gallery.

Information for this story was provided by Creative Foundations.



PIN relies heavily on the dedication of community volunteers and generous donations.

Courtesy photo

People In Need has changed as county grows

Submitted Report

People In Need Inc. (PIN) is a private, not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) social services agency dedicated to providing emergency assistance to Delaware County residents.

The predecessor to PIN began as a food pantry using space in the basement of the Asbury United Methodist Church.

PIN was formally incorporated in 1981 and we have served Delaware County residents for over 35 years. Our county has changed immensely since 1981 and PIN has changed as well in order to accommodate the rapid growth in Delaware County and the ever-changing economic landscape that we all must deal with. We are currently providing: emergency assistance to avoid eviction and to prevent utilities disconnections, assistance in obtaining prescriptions, medical appliances, eyeglasses and dental treatment, school shoes and supplies, and food and personal care items to residents of Delaware County who are in need.

The issues that we work to address can be very complex and beyond the scope of any single organization to resolve. We believe that more can be accomplished by working with other like-minded organizations. To that end PIN has developed new, formal collaborative agreements with other agen-

cies. During FY 2016 PIN expanded the number of formal agreements with other Delaware County agencies from two to seven and we are continually working to formalize additional collaboration opportunities.

In addition to working cooperatively with other organizations, PIN relies heavily on the dedication of our community volunteers and their generous donations. PIN created new service opportunities for corporate groups and individuals and during our last fiscal year, over 11,583 documented volunteer hours were donated to PIN programs.

During the past 12 months we have made the following improvements to better serve our clients:

- We have developed Spanish language materials to extend PIN's community outreach and have produced a promotional video for increasing general awareness and outreach.
- Thanks to the cooperation of the Delaware Area Transit Authority (DATA), a DATA bus stop will be located at the PIN facility, beginning in July 2016.
- With the support of the United Way of Delaware County, PIN improved and expanded its food pantry. Clients can choose either pre-packed food orders or they can stop at our pantry and choose the items that go into their order.
- Working with the Mid-Ohio Food Bank, PIN hosts fresh produce markets. Since July 2015, these

markets have provided over 78,000 pounds of fresh produce to our neighbors that need a hand. We have also been able to make fresh produce available up to four times per month for those that need it.

• The Holiday Clearing House, Smoke Detector Battery Distribution Initiative, School Shoe/Supply Program, and Box Fan Distribution are other services provided that are always reviewed for potential improvement.

To ensure an ongoing improvement process, client surveys are collected at the time of service and a follow-up survey will provide valuable input into future program modifications.

The work undertaken by PIN would not be possible without the support of the Delaware County community. To assure our supporters that their generosity is being used wisely, PIN worked with the Central Ohio Better Business Bureau (BBB) and has achieved full "Accredited Charity" status. We are also developing additional ways to advertise PIN's programs and support opportunities such as improved marketing of the PIN Endowment Fund, creating a "donate by text" opportunity, and much more.

Our thanks to Delaware County for your support and our promise to continue our mission as long as we are able.

Information for this story was provided by People In Need Inc.

FIDELITY FEDERAL a bank for all generations

Submitted Report

It starts with your first savings account. Then getting a loan for that first car and home purchase. Then finally planning for your retirement years. Fidelity Federal Savings & Loan is your community bank for all generations.

Fidelity Federal Savings and Loan Association has been serving individuals and businesses in the Delaware community and surrounding communities since 1887. The past five years have been a busy time for Fidelity Federal. They expanded their lending product offerings and online services, renovated the main office to better serve their customers and staff, and for the first time in the history of Fidelity Federal, the first female president/CEO, Ana Babiasz, was elected.

Lending products now include FHA, VA and USDA loans along with conventional and construction loans, home equity lines of credit and auto loans. Mortgage rate information and the online application for conventional loans is available online at www.fidfedsl.com.

In today's instant access world, Fidelity Federal has kept pace with the demand for a variety of online banking services including internet banking, online bill pay, e-statements and mobile banking. Just a few years ago, consumers were cautiously looking at mobile banking with interest; now it is proving to be the consumer's choice. It is a quick, convenient and secure way to keep in touch with your accounts whenever you need it, wherever you go.

As the financial industry changes, the need to retain some of the traditional banking services and values remains. An example is a savings, checking and certificate of deposits. Fidelity Federal's deposit program offers these base savings tools along with Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and Roth IRAs. Fidelity Federal also welcomes the young saver and encourages them to begin a pattern of saving and will provide them the services they need as their banking needs change over the years.

With more products and services, the need for additional staff work space contributed to Fidelity Federal's most recent project — the renovation of the main office located in Delaware's historic downtown district. More efficient back office space was developed for the lending department and a touch of modern décor was applied to the lobby area. This included a new, comfortable seating area with a refreshment station for customers and visitors.

Fidelity Federal has its roots in Delaware, and has remained a mutual institution for most of its history. With two offices located in Delaware, a majority of staff and board of directors are from the local communities and are proud to have served their customers for many years.

Giving back to the community is also important to Fidelity Federal. Each year they sponsor a "Customer Paper Shred Day"; for the past three years have sponsored the countywide high school art competition at the Arts Castle; participate as a Delaware Chamber of Commerce "After Hours" sponsor; for the second consecutive year they will be the Opening Day Sponsor of the Delaware County Fair; participate in First Friday events; and sponsor various youth and high school athletics. Fidelity Federal best exemplifies the strong ties its employees and board members have with the Delaware community.

With all of the available options in modern banking, choosing a bank or financial service provider can be a difficult and confusing task. Fidelity Federal is here to answer your questions and be your financial partner for life.

Information for this story was provided by Fidelity Federal Savings & Loan.



Courtesy photo

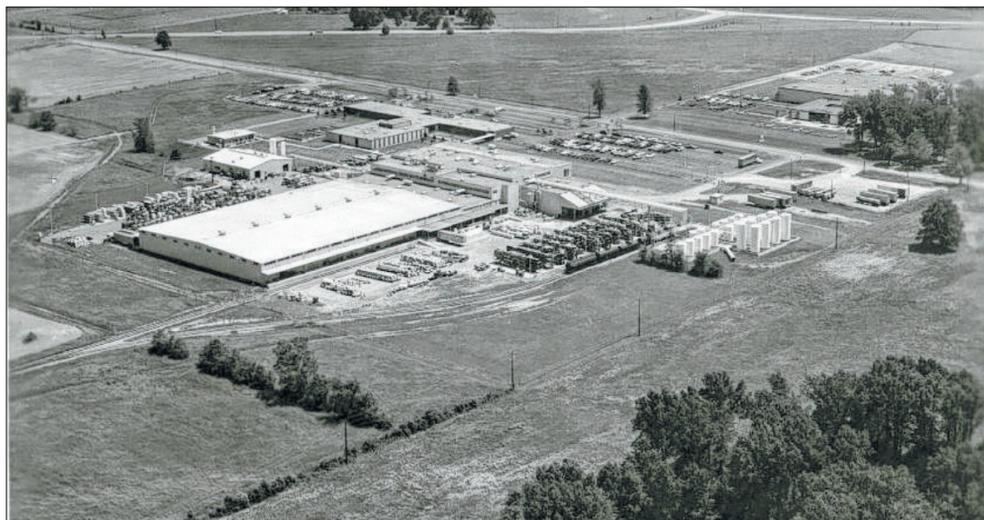
Michelle and Jody represent Fidelity Federal at the Delaware County Fair.

BUSINESS



Engineered Materials Systems is the new occupant of the city's Innovation Park.

Gary Budzak | The Gazette



PPG was the first occupant of the city's first industrial park.

Courtesy photo | City of Delaware

Delaware has many business parks

By Gary Budzak
gbudzak@civitasmedia.com

The city of Delaware has several business parks, according to its economic development director.

Among them are ones on Pittsburgh Drive, Wolf Industrial Park, Kroger Distribution Center and Innovation Park, said director Sean Hughes.

Pittsburgh Drive had the first end-user, PPG, in 1965. The area was chosen because it was near the city's airport and had few residences as neighbors.

"There were industrial areas of the city before with buildings like 435 Park Ave., 61 Flax St., etc., but nothing that was truly a contained industrial park such as Pittsburgh Drive," Hughes said.

Last year, PPG, which makes paint used by body shops, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Pittsburgh Drive.

"To see a company celebrate its 50th anniversary is very unusual," he said. "You can go to any Ohio countryside of old companies that failed for whatever reason. The power of PPG is as an incredibly innovative company, and they have truly adjusted to the market needs and federal regulations."

Across the street from PPG, Midwest Acoust-A-Fiber will expand.

In the 1960s, electric companies created the modern industrial parks in cities like Delaware to bring in new customers. Despite deregulation, they are still partners, Hughes said. For example,

American Electric Power recently provided a grant of \$5,000 to fund new business park signage in Delaware.

While business parks grew, manufacturing in urban residential areas waned.

"Flax Street happened naturally," Hughes said. "It got to the point where it wasn't capable of housing modern manufacturing processes. It's hard to re-utilize one of these old industrial buildings that sits in a neighborhood for modern industrial."

The extension of Sawmill Parkway has brought about the new Innovation Park site, where Engineered Materials Systems celebrated being the first business to open.

Hughes said he prefers the term "business park" over "industrial park," because a business park implies more types of jobs.

"People are wanting higher-paying jobs," he said. "We're the wealthiest and highest education-attained county in the state, but 80 percent of our labor force are leaving to work outside the county."

Companies occupying business parks in the future may not necessarily be manufacturers, he said. Instead, they may be businesses that offer jobs city and county workers desire, such as engineering, high-tech and research and development. In turn, less commuting means more money stays in the community, and a more sustainable business climate.

Gary Budzak may be reached at 740-413-0904 or on Twitter @ GaryBudzak.

Easyfit Products in business since 1989

Submitted Report

Easyfit Products Inc. has been building beautiful kitchens at affordable prices throughout Delaware County and surrounding areas since 1989. Family-owned with six active family members and over 20 local craftsmen on the staff, Easyfit manufactures custom countertops in granite, quartz, solid surface and laminate materials in its 35,000 square foot, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, located at 320 London Road, Delaware.

Additionally, the company distributes fine crafted kitchen and bath cabinetry manufactured by Medallion and Merrilat, offering custom design and layouts as an integral part of the total kitchen experience.

Easyfit offers endless selection options featuring two huge showrooms loaded with custom kitchen and bath displays and samples. Clients may browse the kitchen display center, choose door samples and color samples and proceed to the indoor granite and quartz selection warehouse to select from hundreds of full-size granite and quartz slabs to find just the right countertop material for your new countertop.

Easyfit offers free design and estimating services provided by experienced staff designers and they understand the budgeting process better than

anyone in the business. A new kitchen is huge deal and can be an intimidating process with so many options, colors, materials and price ranges to choose from. Easyfit, as a company, has over 25 years of experience in the kitchen business and the owners have been building beautiful kitchens for over 40 years. They are patient experts at helping a customer find the right products at the right price to fit your desired results.

Easyfit Products Inc. has its roots in the wholesale countertop manufacturing business, supplying some of Ohio's most recognized kitchen and bath retailers all across the state. The countertop business in granite, quartz and solid surface is high production and much of the work is automated. Visitors can take a guided tour of the manufacturing process to see exactly how their new countertop will be produced.

Showrooms are open daily Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday with appointments available evenings and Saturdays. The facility is highly visible from the intersection of Liberty Road and London Road. Look for the large window signs announcing the huge showroom, granite, quartz and kitchen cabinets at 320 London Road, Delaware. Visit www.easyfitproductsinc.com or call 740-362-9900.

Information for this story was provided by Easyfit Products Inc.

Sunbury celebrating its 200th birthday

By Lenny C. Lepola
newsguy@ee.net

Two brothers from Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania, William and Lawrence Myers, platted the village of Sunbury in Berkshire Township on Nov. 9, 1816. In anticipation of the village's 200th birthday, during 2015 a committee of 10-plus volunteers was busy planning Sunbury's bicentennial celebration, creating a schedule of bicentennial-related activities throughout 2016.

Rather than scheduling one big bicentennial event, members of the committee chose to apply a bicentennial theme to existing village events, and added several bicentennial-specific events.

Sunbury's official bicentennial celebration began in early December with a bicentennial princess pageant held in historic Sunbury Town Hall, where 13 young ladies vied for the princess crown.

During the pageant, Brooke Setmire was crowned as the village of Sunbury Bicentennial Princess. As Sunbury's bicentennial princess, Brooke has represented the village during all bicentennial events during the year. She began her reign as bicentennial princess by riding in a convertible during the 2015 Sunbury Christmas on the Square parade.

Brooke is the face of Sunbury's future as it approaches city status; but the bicentennial is about Sunbury's founding 200 years ago when the surrounding wilderness opened for settlement with the 1795 signing of the Greenville Treaty. Back then Sunbury was a dense forest with a major Indian trail, the Walhonding Trail, crossing a footpath leading to the Zanesville area through today's Granville.

Big Belly's Creek, named for an Indian Chief with a big belly, ran through the forest. The name was changed to Big Walnut Creek. If not for that name change, today's boys and girls might be attending school in the Big Belly Local School District.

In 1800 President John Adams deeded land in the new frontier to soldiers who served during the American Revolution. The village of Sunbury is part of that deeded land. While living in Washington, Massachusetts, Moses Byxbe purchased 8,000 acres from American Revolution soldiers who were rewarded with land deeds, but chose not to become pioneers. In 1805 Byxbe traveled to Luzerne County in Pennsylvania looking for land buyers willing to travel to the newly opened Ohio and brought them to today's Berkshire Township.

Byxbe hired Azarieth Root to survey a road from Alum Creek through Berkshire along the Indian trail to Raccoon Town, near Johnstown, and to the future Granville. That road would eventually become State Route 37 that runs through Sunbury. Also in 1805, John Sebon sold 4,000 acres of Ohio land to land speculators Jonas Stanberry and Joseph Constant. Stanberry sold land to Daniel Alden. William and Lawrence Myers bought 200 acres from Alden and in 1816 the Myers brothers platted the village of Sunbury.

Lawrence and William Myers laid out their town around a commons known today as Sunbury Village Square. Lawrence Myers built a one-room frame house along the Walhonding Indian trail, which would become Columbus Street; and Granville Road was surveyed. William built his log house at the southwest corner of Granville Road and Vernon Street.

In 1820 a corduroy (log) state road suitable for stagecoach travel was opened along the Walhonding Indian Trail from Mount Vernon to Columbus. This later became CCC Highway, today's Old 3-C Highway.

Lawrence Myers built a two-story frame stagecoach inn to accommodate stagecoach travelers – that building



Lenny C. Lepola | For The Gazette

Sunbury's 200th birthday is in 2016. On Dec. 5, 2015, a pageant was held at Sunbury Town Hall to select the village's bicentennial princess. Brooke Setmire, center, was selected as Sunbury's bicentennial princess, and has been representing the village during all of this year's bicentennial events. Thirteen young ladies participated in the pageant. Emma Wheeler, center right, was first runner-up, and Adriana Knickerbocker, center left, was second runner-up.

is part of today's Myers Inn Museum at the southwest corner of Village Square. Around the same time a log schoolhouse was built on Village Square.

In 1839 members of the Sunbury Baptist Church raised a frame building at the corner of Cherry and Morning streets, and the church basement was used as a school during the 1840s.

Shortly after Sunbury turned 50 years old, in 1868 Lt. Col. Adolphus Granville Frambes raised \$5,000 for a two-story private brick school called the Sunbury Institute that was situated at the center of Village Square. The Masons raised an additional \$1,300 to add a third floor to the building to use as a Masonic Lodge. Today, that building is Sunbury Town Hall, a village gem that's listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Many notable events occurred through the years as the village grew to its present size.

The railroad came to town, businesses grew and thrived; some businesses died out. Markets and other businesses that provided rural folks from adjacent townships with the necessities of life lined the square. In the early 20th century, Sunbury was even home to automobile dealerships – right downtown.

And there was always a newspaper in those pre-digital days. Newspapers changed ownership and the names on the masthead changed, but one newspaper still serves Sunbury and the Big Walnut community – The Sunbury News.

Sunbury Mayor Tommy Hatfield said that what appears to many folks as sudden growth hasn't been all that sudden – the proverbial writing was on the wall when the Miller family began selling farmland and the village limits jumped across State Route 3.

The original Miller farmland has become Community Library, CVS Pharmacy, Sunbury United Methodist Church, Fairland Plaza, and Sunbury Mills Plaza – aka the Kroger plaza.

"We're going to continue growing, and very soon we'll be growing faster than we ever imagined," Hatfield said. "As we celebrate our village's 200th birthday we need to embrace inevitable change, but at the same time we need to work at maintaining the values of old Sunbury – that sense of who we are, where we came from, what we stand for."

Hatfield said it's significant that Sunbury is celebrating its bicentennial year and near-city status at the same time that the village is being tasked with providing leadership in a rapidly growing eastern Delaware County.

"It's important that we understand our role as a municipal anchor as we move forward," Hatfield said. "Without being threatening, Sunbury has to continue to look outside its borders to provide the kind of leadership residents of the Big Walnut Local School District are looking for; and we have to understand, and build upon, our relationship with our nearest neighbor, the village of Galena."

"I've come to appreciate the way the village was laid out 200 years ago, and you can still see that plan today," Hatfield said. "That shows that we can make decisions today that will last hundreds of years into the future."

Sunbury still has several bicentennial-flavored events on the calendar, including the Aug. 27 Sunbury Sizzle & Sounds Food and Music Festival.

Reporter Lenny C. Lepola can be reached at 614-266-6093.

Say it with flowers, gifts from Gibson the Florist

Submitted Report

Gibson the Florist, locally owned and operated by Dawn Rittenhouse, has been in business for more than 90 years in downtown Delaware.

As a full-service florist, Gibson's offers an array of floral products and services, including fresh floral arrangements, silk and dried arrangements, plants and dish gardens, fruit and gourmet baskets, balloon bouquets, plush animals, tropical arrangements and corsages and boutonnières.

They also provide floral arrangements and other spe-

cialty items for weddings, funerals and special events.

Gibson's also carries a wide variety of gifts, accessories and collectibles including Boyds Bears, Candle Art candles and Thomas Kinkaid throws.

To send flowers across town or across the country, call Gibson the Florist today and be sure to stop in and see our large selection of gifts.

Gibson the Florist is at 19 W. Winter St, Delaware, and at Gibsontheflorist.com on the web. Hours are from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. weekdays and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. The phone number is 740-363-1394.

Information for this story was provided by Gibson the Florist.



Courtesy photo

Gibson's offers an array of floral products and services

Strand

From page 1

tion, the state approved its 2017-18 budget, which included a \$175,000 appropriation for the renovation of the theater.

Managing director Tracey Peyton says that the money will go to renovating the balcony seating area.

"The Strand has seen many changes in society the past 100 years," said Benny Shoultz from the Delaware County Historical Society at the theater's anniversary celebration. "Just think — our country has gone through two world wars and at least five other conflicts, the departure of the horse and buggy to the automobile. ..."

"The movies themselves went from the silent movies to talkies, from black and white to color. From 2D to 3D, from Cinemascope and to the most recent upgrade to digital, an upgrade that many small theaters could not do, thus they couldn't survive. The Strand has survived all this and mainly because the people of Delaware supported it."

Though it began with just one screen in 1916, it has grown over the years to house three screens with 550 seats. In its opening week, The Gazette

printed an ad that showcased the "state of the art theater," complete with modern air circulation systems and sanitary drinking fountains, not to mention the latest technology in movie projectors, which back then was a carbon arc projector that burned an actual flame.

"This place is only standing because of the community support and the sponsors we've had," said Peyton.

The theater strives to give back to the community that has continually supported it. This summer it's hosting its annual Kids Summer Movie Series where they screen kids movies for free every Tuesday in return for donations to local charities. Families bring donations like toiletry items or school supplies that the theater collects and gives to charity. Peyton feels as though the effect is greater than just helping those less fortunate.

"The parents actually encourage the kids to drop off the donations at the table, so the kids are learning at a young age that it's really good to support your community and support other people that need help. So that tradition has continued for generations and has allowed us to keep doing these types of events," Peyton said.

Morgyn Cooper is an intern for The Gazette.



The Strand Theatre today.

Morgyn Cooper | For The Gazette



EDUCATION

Grace school offers advanced curriculum

Submitted Report

Grace Community School and Pre-school (GCS) offers your child a college preparatory curriculum based on standards higher than a traditional school.

GCS educates the whole child. Our curriculum is advanced since we are a private school. We teach to the mind of your child but we also consider the social, emotional, physical and spiritual aspects as well.

We strive for excellence as we teach from a Christian Philosophy of Education. Each child is unique and has special talents. We realize that all children are not alike. They learn differently. Children are unique and may not prosper completely in a "cookie-cutter" style school. We want each child to be successful in learning and growing as a young person in all endeavors. We allow children to be creative and mature in a positive and caring environment.

GCS is a student and family oriented "Non-Public Chartered School and Preschool" offering preschool through

eighth grade.

We offer a strong academic program. Kindergarten students are learning phonics and are able to read by the end of the year. We also start cursive writing and mathematics in kindergarten.

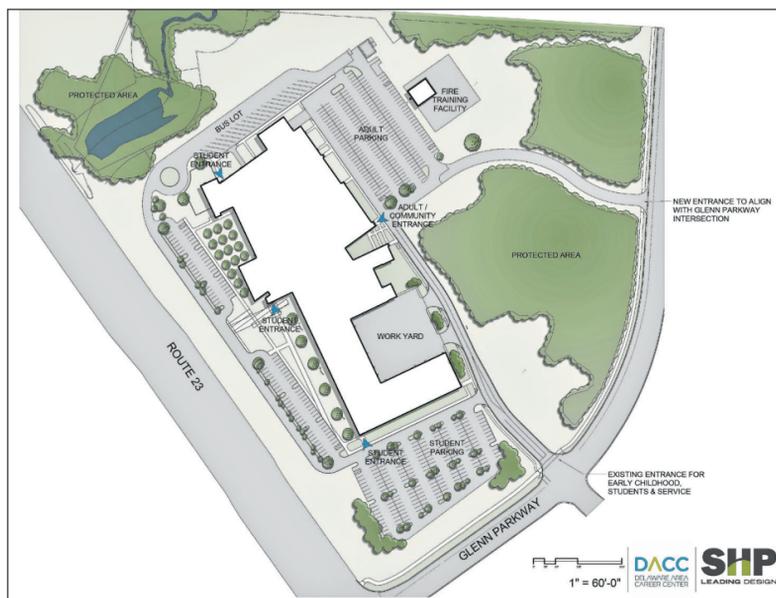
All grades offer a high-quality curriculum based upon the basics of reading, writing and math. The student books are quite colorful and remarkable. Our teachers are loving, kind, passionate and knowledgeable, have college degrees and are licensed by the state of Ohio.

If you would like to tour our school, look at the textbooks, or observe the classroom, please call the school at 740-363-5800.

GCS offers an education that starts with the heart!

It is located at 715 W. William St., Delaware. Its phone number is 740-363-5800. Its website is startwiththeheart.school.com.

Information for this story was provided by Grace Community School and Preschool.



The site plan for the consolidated campus calls for a traffic light to be placed at the intersection of U.S. 23 and Glenn Parkway and a new driveway be added on Glenn Parkway. The driveway from U.S. 23 directly into the campus parking lot will be demolished over safety concerns. The new wing of the school will house many of the North Campus programs, like auto tech and construction, and will have a higher ceiling than the rest of the school.

DACC continues to grow

By Glenn Battishill
gbattishill@delgazette.com

The Delaware Area Career Center has grown by more than 300 students in the last five years and has added programs and planned a consolidation to accommodate future growth.

DACC Superintendent Mary Beth Freeman said the career center had 889 students in 2011 and more than 1,200 in the 2015-16 school year. Freeman said that isn't just students on campus but also includes students at satellite facilities.

Freeman said the challenge for the school is keeping up with the trends in enrollment and the workforce. For example, for the 2016-17 school year, the career center will be adding a second digital design class after the first class was a huge success, an engineering pharmacy course and an app design class.

"[These course] were added based on business industry demands and student interest," Freeman said. She said the center has added programs in the past, according to industry growth.

Freeman said the career center has grown so quickly because of its student-centric approach.

"We looked at personalized learning plans for students," Freeman said. "Build a plan that works for them. These plans include flexible learning and changing from an environment where everyone sits at the desk and create an environment that's more like a workplace environment. We are trying

to look at educating the whole person."

One of the challenges facing the career center, according to Freeman and other school officials, was the two campuses and the logistical problems moving students between both locations caused.

To improve this, Freeman and the DACC Board of Education have approved a \$45 million consolidated campus project that will unite all the students, staff and programs at an expanded campus located at the current South Campus on U.S. 23.

DACC officials approved the plans for the project in April and preliminary work is already underway. DACC officials say the new campus will be built around the existing South Campus location and will add a new wing to house many of the North Campus programs, including auto tech, welding and construction. The North Campus will be closed.

The consolidated campus will also eliminate the need to bus students between campuses and allow students to share the same media center and other support staff.

"Growth aspect is bigger and broader than consolidating," Freeman said.

Freeman said that, as the DACC grows, it is also forming new relationships with community partners, including the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, with whom they share an instructor; Maryhaven treatment center; and Grady Memorial Hospital and OhioHealth.

"We are no longer just this island on our own," Freeman said.

Glenn Battishill can be reached at 740-413-0903 or on Twitter @BattishillDG.

IN THE CITY



Gary Budzak photos | The Gazette

Farmers markets held in downtown Delaware have helped attract people to the shops on other days.

Downtown Delaware businesses are bustling

By Gary Budzak
gbudzak@civitasmedia.com

"What are they doing to my downtown?" was one of the comments Frances Jo Hamilton recalls hearing when the city of Delaware undertook its streetscape project in the late 1990s.

"A contingency of the community were concerned, too," said Hamilton, who is now the executive director of Main Street Delaware, a nonprofit organization that promotes the downtown. "Stores that were on the brink were pushed over the edge. We did lose some businesses in that period of time."

The \$5 million streetscape project, a partnership with the city and local businesses, involved getting a community development block grant to get the power lines buried, bricks on sidewalks and adding street furniture.

"People don't want to bring a business to a downtown that looks downtrodden," Hamilton said. "Building owners at that time said maybe we should renovate. Having those renovations at that time started attracting some new businesses that can sustain themselves in the downtown."

There was also an increase in restaurants.

"It was an uphill climb at first, but if we want people to eat downtown every day of the week, we've got to provide enough food that they're not eating the same thing everyday. It's not always competition."

Recently, Hamilton received a letter from a woman who said it took her family 45 minutes to get served in a restaurant during one of Main Street Delaware's First Friday events.

With the emergence of big box stores on the outskirts of Delaware, the downtown shopping landscape has changed from "what we require to what we desire," Hamilton said. However, the pendulum may be swinging back. For instance, with the opening of The Greater Gouda cheese and meat shop, along with A Little Simplicity and the farmers market, one can buy groceries downtown.

"Community responsibility is clicking in for people to support these local companies," Hamilton said. "I think people are tired of shopping a 100,000 square-foot store for a few grocery items. They'd rather come to the farmers market and enjoy the downtown."

Main Street Delaware's First Friday and farmers market events were designed to bring people to the downtown and shop at the stores — not just that day, but at other times as well.

"We've seen great increases in sales and walk-through traffic," Hamilton said.

"Our business core, the historic downtown Delaware, also continued to prosper in 2015, finishing the year with 94 percent first-floor occupancy," said city economic development director Sean Hughes on the city's website. "Hundreds of thousands of people per year are now migrating to our downtown to spend money on food, beverages, specialty goods and entertainment."

"In 1999, we were 55 percent occupancy," Hamilton said. "Empty buildings to me are potential. Something really great could happen there. What I hate to see is what I call occupied vacancy, where you have a business in there but they're never open and nobody else can move in there."

Hamilton praised the business owners in the downtown, who are "like a little family." She cited the fire at the 12 West restaurant, where other businesses hired the displaced workers until the Mexican restaurant reopened, and donations were collected.

"It's a really unique group of people, and they all want to help each other."

Gary Budzak may be reached at 740-413-0904 or on Twitter @GaryBudzak.

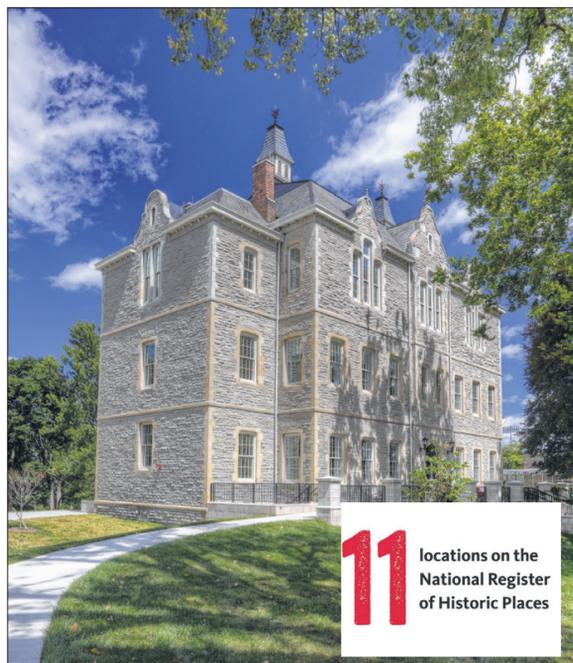


Gary Budzak photos | The Gazette

Many downtown businesses have worked extensively on exterior and interior renovations.

Building a strong legacy

Ohio Wesleyan prepares to celebrate 175 years of progress



11 locations on the National Register of Historic Places

Merrick Hall's third-floor exterior

Courtesy photo | Larry Hamill

Submitted Report

In fall 2017, Ohio Wesleyan University will celebrate the 175th anniversary of its founding. Since 1842, the university has become a vital part of the Delaware community, welcoming residents to campus to enjoy artistic performances, athletic events, and lectures – all in a historic environment that includes 11 locations on the National Register of Historic Places. As we prepare for fall foliage to color the local landscape, we invite you to walk our 200-acre campus and visit these historically significant sites. An online map of campus is available at www.owu.edu/map.

ELLIOTT HALL: The best place to start an OWU walking tour is at the beginning. Built in 1833, Elliott Hall is the oldest building on the Ohio Wesleyan campus as well as the oldest collegiate Greek Revival building in Ohio. Elliott Hall was built as a hotel, called the Mansion House, to accommodate guests to the nearby Sulphur Spring. When the hotel was put up for sale a few years later, the Rev. Adam Poe, pastor of William Street Methodist Church, encouraged the citizens of Delaware to buy it in order to found a university.

STURGES HALL: Just west of Elliott Hall is Sturges Hall, a red-brick replica of the wood-sided former hotel. Sturges Hall opened in 1855 as a library. It transitioned to academic space when Slocum Hall was constructed next door.

SLOCUM HALL: Sitting just north of Sturges Hall, Slocum Hall also was built as a library and opened in 1898. It is one of the university's hidden architectural gems, containing an eye-catching 70-foot-long by 20-foot-wide leaded glass ceiling not visible from its exterior. The ceiling features 18 glass portraits of thinkers ranging from Abraham Lincoln to William Shakespeare. A throwback to its library days, Slocum Reading Room still houses bound volumes of *The New York Times* that date back to 1914.

UNIVERSITY HALL: Just north of Slocum Hall, University Hall is an Ohio Wesleyan icon, with a 148-foot bell tower that inspired the title of New York Times best-selling author Richard North Patterson's thriller "The Spire." (Patterson is a 1968 OWU alumnus.) Opened in 1893, University Hall is the home of Gray Chapel, one of the region's pre-eminent concert halls and performance home of the Central Ohio Symphony. Gray Chapel contains one of the nation's largest Klais pipe organs – a four manual tracker action organ with 82 ranks, 55 stops, and 4,644 pipes. During the academic year, University Hall's entry is adorned with flags from every country represented by OWU students. Also in the entry is a large mirror once housed inside the White House. The mirror was a gift from Delaware native and 19th U.S. President Rutherford B. Hayes and his wife, first lady Lucy Webb Hayes. Webb attended OWU for a time, and Hayes proposed to her on the steps of Elliott Hall.

MERRICK HALL: Just east of University Hall is Merrick Hall, named after former OWU President Frederick Merrick. Thanks to an \$8-million donor gift, the building was renovated and reopened in fall 2015, after being closed for nearly 30 years. Today, Merrick Hall is the home of The OWU Connection, a program dedicated to helping Ohio Wesleyan students plan travel-learning experiences that expand and enhance their globally focused, liberal arts educations. The third floor of the historic building features an eye-catching 22-foot ceiling. The building, which opened in 1873, was built using materials quarried at what is now Delaware's Blue Limestone Park.

SELBY STADIUM: Just east of Merrick Hall, Selby Stadium opened in 1929 and is believed to be the oldest such facility in the nation constructed to, and remaining in, its original Olympic specifications. The stadium cost \$160,000 when it was built and includes two grandstands that seat approximately 9,100 enthusiasts for OWU football, field hockey, track and field, and lacrosse. The stadium's outdoor lights and video scoreboard were added in 2010.

EDWARDS GYMNASIUM: West of the stadium is Edwards Gymnasium, a building central to



Merrick Hall's interior

Courtesy photo | Larry Hamill

MERRICK HALL

Today, Merrick Hall is the home of The OWU Connection, a program dedicated to helping Ohio Wesleyan students plan travel-learning experiences that expand and enhance their globally focused, liberal arts educations.

Battling Bishop athletics since it opened during the 1905-1906 school year. The building stands as an example of the shift to standardized physical education, rather than informal sports and military training that occurred at the turn of the century. The building was fully renovated and reopened in fall 2015. The donor-funded project included repairing its second-floor basketball court and restoring its previously boarded-over skylight. Simultaneously, the university renovated its former natatorium to create the adjacent Simpson Querrey Fitness Center, which houses the state-of-the-art Jannuzzi Dance Studio.

STUYVESANT HALL: Across campus to the northwest, Stuyvesant Hall is Ohio Wesleyan's oldest residence hall. When it opened in 1931, Stuyvesant Hall served as a nationwide model for college dormitories with innovative architecture that includes two double-occupancy bedrooms sharing a common bathroom. The building underwent a \$14-million renovation in 2011-2012 that included adding energy-efficient heating, cooling, and lighting systems. The work also restored the building's bell tower and chimes. The Ohio Department of Development awarded the project a \$4.2 million Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit – the first project in Delaware County to be granted a state preservation tax credit. Since its completion, the environmentally friendly building has earned LEED Silver Certification.

OWU STUDENT OBSERVATORY: Adjacent to Stuyvesant Hall, the OWU Student Observatory is used regularly by the university's astronomy students. Built in 1896, the on-campus observatory was funded by Hiram M. Perkins, professor of mathematics and astronomy; his wife, Caroline Barkdull Perkins; and his sister, Sarah P. Howard. The student observatory originally was called "Perkins Astronomical Observatory," but it was renamed the "Student Observatory" after the second, larger Perkins Observatory was built south of Delaware in 1923-1924. The student observatory features a 9.5-inch refracting telescope.

SANBORN HALL: Located on nearby Elizabeth Street, Sanborn Hall was built in 1909 to create a space for both music majors and non-majors to appreciate the art form. The building includes Jemison Auditorium, the site of many free music performances open to the community.

AUSTIN MANOR: Just north of Sanborn Hall is Austin Manor – one of the only integrated housing spaces in the United States. Included among the apartment complex's residents are current OWU students, retired senior citizens, and working families. Today, Austin Manor includes more than 60 one- and two-bedroom apartments. Originally, it opened in 1932 as Austin Hall, an all-female dormitory.

For more information about Ohio Wesleyan, including upcoming events, visit www.owu.edu.



Slocum Reading Room ceiling

Courtesy photo | Ohio Wesleyan University



Edwards Gym, second-floor basketball court

Courtesy photo | Larry Hamill



University Hall

Courtesy photo | Paul Molitor



Gray Chapel's Rexford Keller Memorial Organ

Courtesy photo | Flying Fotos, LLC



Selby Stadium

Courtesy photo | Mark Schmitter

UNIVERSITY HALL

Today, Merrick Hall is the home of The OWU Connection, a program dedicated to helping Ohio Wesleyan students plan travel-learning experiences that expand and enhance their globally focused, liberal arts educations.

GRAY CHAPEL'S REXFORD KELLER MEMORIAL ORGAN

Gray Chapel houses the Rexford Keller Memorial Organ, the largest of six Klais organs in the country, and serves primarily as a multi-purpose concert hall. Some chaplaincy events, such as the annual Baccalaureate Service, still take place there.

SELBY STADIUM

The stadium cost \$160,000 when it was built and includes two grandstands that seat approximately 9,100 enthusiasts for OWU football, field hockey, track and field, and lacrosse.

EDUCATION



Glenn Battishill | The Gazette

Workers from Dunlop and Johnston lay bricks on the new wing at Dempsey Middle School one afternoon in September 2015. The new wing is part of a series of new improvements to pave the way for sixth-grade classes to return to the middle school and the elementary schools to host kindergarten through fifth grade. Dempsey was just one of many construction projects throughout the district in the past five years.

Five years of change for Delaware City Schools

By Glenn Battishill
gbattishill@delgazette.com

2011 was a make or break year for the Delaware City School District, according to Superintendent Paul Craft.

2011's impact can still be seen at Delaware City Schools today as it expands both in student population, academics and construction projects at six of the district's seven buildings.

"We were getting ready to ask for our 2011 levy," Craft said. Craft said the 8.3-mill levy was essential for keeping the district afloat without massive cuts in staffing and programs. "[After those cuts] we would've been a different district. But the community came out and supported us."

The community would come out to support the district in 2013 to approve a 3.6-mill bond issue that is funding expansions at all of the district's elementary schools, as well as Dempsey Middle School and Hayes High School.

The expansions were designed to support the district's move to a traditional kindergarten through fifth-grade elementary school model and instruct sixth through eighth grades at Dempsey. To facilitate this plan, new wings of classrooms were added at

Schultz Elementary, Carlisle Elementary and Conger Elementary, and a sixth-grade wing, complete with labs and a gym, was added to Dempsey.

These projects will be completed for students' return to school this year but there's still more construction ahead as classrooms and gyms are added at Woodward Elementary and Smith Elementary. A new wing of 21 classrooms is also under construction at Hayes High.

The district has changed a lot academically as well in the last five years, Craft said.

"2011 was the first year we were given the 'excellent with distinction' grade," Craft said. "We were able to show our students were performing with the best in Ohio. Older staff feel really proud with what we are doing here."

Craft said that, in the past five years, lessons have become more personalized to each student's needs and technology is now used to give younger students individualized lessons to help them keep up.

Craft said the middle school and high school have also grown in the number of advanced placement classes to help students prepare for college.

Craft said the district has also grown substantially in the last five years.

"In January 2011 we had 5,000 students. In January of this year, we had 5,500 students and we've got 150 more on the way this year," he said.

Moving forward, Craft said the district will be undergoing a "year of transitions" as the district moves to the new kindergarten structure and over half of the teachers in the district will have changed classrooms.

This transition won't stop the district from continuing to improve, Craft said.

"We want to get better and we want to do better," he said. "We have a growth mindset, individually geared towards each student's needs."

Glenn Battishill can be reached at 740-413-0903 or on Twitter @BattishillDG.

Courtesy photo | Delaware City Schools



Craft





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Olentangy prepares for fourth high school

By Morgyn Cooper
For The Gazette

Through the last five years, Olentangy Local School District has remained an important component to the culture and growth of the area. The 95 square-mile school district has continued to provide a high quality education to all its students while tackling the challenge of accommodating the large growth it experiences every year, according to school officials.

"The whole time I've been here, managing growth has been a major focus for us," said Superintendent Mark Raiff.

"It's a challenge that a lot of districts don't have to deal with, and the whole time we're trying to do that and focus on providing the best educational experience as possible."

Over the last decade the school rankings have increased dramatically. Raiff said he remembers that when he came to the district 14 years ago, it was ranked in the bottom third of its group. Today it's in the top third in all measures with rankings continuing to climb.

"People move here for the school district," Raiff said. He isn't wrong either, as most of the surrounding real estate agencies advertise OLSD specifically, posting it very visibly on all their signs.

"The biggest challenge is keeping up financially," admitted Raiff. "Thankfully our community supported us nine times in a row with the levy."

It seems it has been successful and fiscally responsible in that challenge as the district spends less per pupil in terms of cost than any school district in Ohio, officials say.

Raiff said that the ever-increasing student population along with the disproportionate state funding that the district receives is the reason that the levy is kept on the ballot though. The expansive district receives the same amount of funding as districts that are much smaller and districts that are actually shrinking.

In order to accommodate its growth, the district is currently building a fourth high school, for which it had a groundbreaking ceremony on June 9.

The high school is expected to be open for the 2018-19 school year and will be located on Berlin Station Road near Gregory Road and the railroad tracks.

Piatt Road, which currently ends at Cheshire Road, will be extended to Berlin Station.

One of the biggest difficulties the district will have to face in regards to the new school is redistricting. The board will have to draw new boundaries on the map for each high school in order to include the fourth school. Raiff said that it will affect every grade level, not just the ninth-, 10th- and 11th-graders who may be attending a new school in 2018.

"The reality is people cannot attend the school they live closest to because of where our population densities are," Raiff said. "We also have to try to anticipate where our future growth will occur so that this redistricting will last."

The redistricting planning will begin in the fall and will be completed, at the latest, in March 2017, Raiff said.

"Wherever anyone gets potentially redistricted to, they will go to a great school," he said.

Olentangy Local Schools placed back-to-school information on its website about a month before classes begin.

The first day of school at all buildings is Aug. 17, with elementary school open houses from 4 to 6 p.m. Aug. 15. The last day of school is May 24. Graduation is May 28 in the Celeste Center.

The first quarter ends Oct. 21; the second quarter and first semester ends Dec. 21; the third quarter ends March 17. Grade cards will be available to parents Nov. 2; Jan. 11; April 5; and May 31. Parent-teacher conferences take place for elementary students on Sept. 29, Oct. 5, Feb. 9, Feb. 15; middle school Nov. 2, Nov. 10, March 9, March 15; high school Oct. 26, Nov. 3, Feb. 22, March 2.

There will be no school on the following days: Sept. 5 (Labor Day); Sept. 19, Nov. 28, and Feb. 17 (professional development); Oct. 14 (COTA Day); Nov. 23-25 (Conference Exchange Day and Thanksgiving break); Dec. 22-Jan. 3 (winter break); Jan. 16 (Martin Luther King Jr. Day); Feb. 20 (Presidents' Day); March 20-24 (spring break).

School hours vary from building to building.

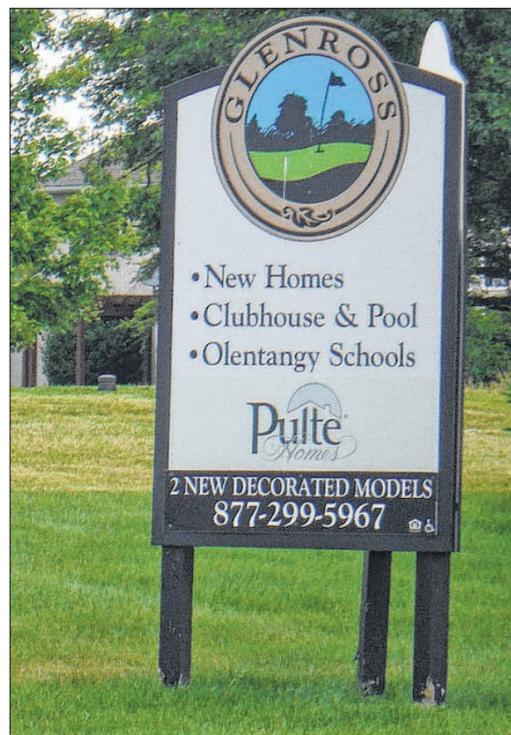
Information on school supplies, school fees, food payment forms, nurse's office and student handbooks are available online at www.olentangy.k12.oh.us

Morgyn Cooper is an intern for The Gazette. Gary Budzak contributed to this report.



Courtesy photo | Olentangy Local Schools

Olentangy Local School District administrators at the groundbreaking ceremony on June 9.



Gary Budzak | For The Gazette

New and existing subdivisions such as Glenross on Cheshire Road list being in the Olentangy School District as a selling point.



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Big Walnut schools poised for rapid residential growth

By Lenny C. Lepola
newsguy@ee.net

The Big Walnut Local School District is currently facing rapid commercial and residential growth hovering on the horizon, and the impact of that growth is all the more evident because it's the same growth bubble that was experienced by the Olentangy School District through the last decade and a half.

That growth bubble is expanding northward and to the east, and that expansion is accelerating because of commercial development around the Interstate 71 and Routes 36/37 interchange.

Big Walnut in 2015 initiated an enrollment study, assembled by Tracey Healy of FutureThink. In 2007 Healey projected Big Walnut's high-end student population in 2017 would be 3,455 students; by the close of the 2015-16 school year, the district's student population hovered around the 3,400-student range – almost at the 10-year high-end projection, three years early.

In August 2015, Superintendent Angie Pollock said Healy's newer enrollment study numbers were striking, but did not come as a surprise — by 2026 the district will be serving at least an additional 2,000 students.

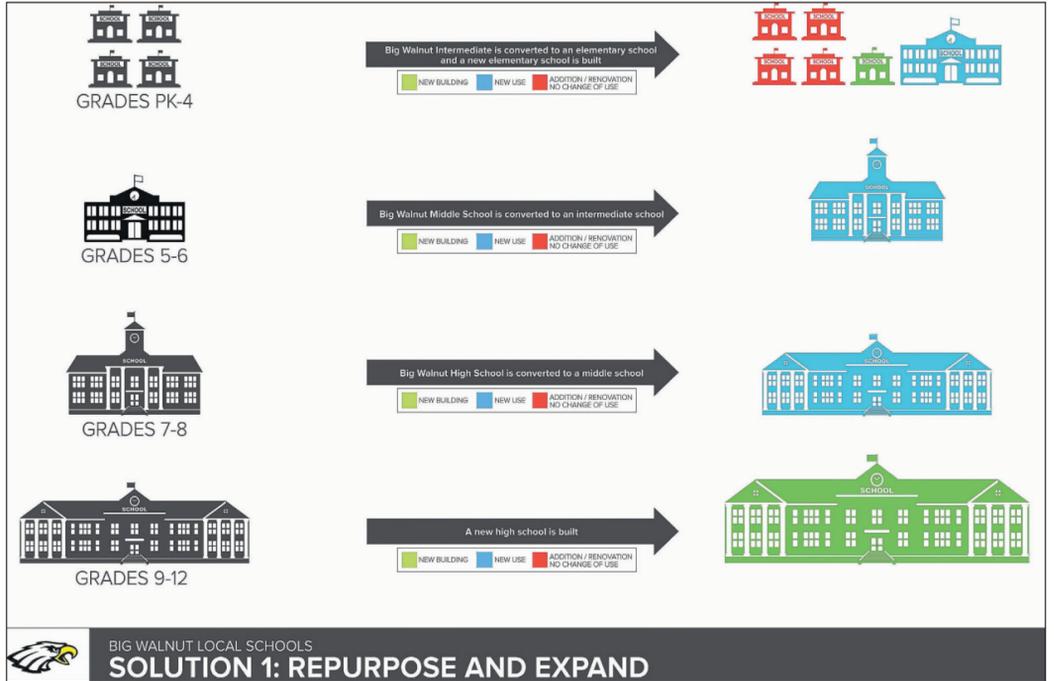
"We've been watching this," Pollock said during an August 2015 interview. "We understand that our secret is out; that we have great schools and taxes are lower than in similar districts. We know we have to meet the growth coming our way."

In response, the school district assembled a facilities planning committee composed of 28 members – two of them board of education members, 12 district staff members (seven of them the district's building principals, plus Pollock, Treasurer Terri Eyermanday, and Assistant Superintendent Mark Cooper), and 14 community members – engineers, commercial building professionals, a real estate professional, one mayor, one township trustee and one state security professional.

Members of that committee joined forces with Triad Architects, and during a series of meetings determined that, with anticipated student population increases every school building in the Big Walnut Local School District would be over capacity by 2019 at the most likely growth rate, one year later at a more modest growth rate.

Using those numbers, members of the facilities committee examined options for meeting anticipated growth and recommended that the district build a new high school and one new elementary building, move middle school students to the existing high school, move intermediate school students to the existing middle school, convert the intermediate school into an elementary building and in-town pre-school facility, and upgrade all district buildings.

Committee members said renovating the existing high school would cost more than a new high school,



Using numbers generated by Tracey Healy of FutureThink, members of the school district's facilities planning committee examined options for meeting anticipated growth and recommended that the school district build a new high school and one new elementary building, move middle school students to the existing high school, move intermediate school students to the existing middle school, convert the intermediate school into an elementary building and in-town pre-school facility, and upgrade all district buildings.

and the needed renovations could not be completed at the landlocked site while school was in session. They also noted that because it takes at least four years to secure land and design and build a high school, the district was already too late in beginning the process.

A core group of district residents opposed to an aggressive building campaign attended the community forums, questioning the reliability of Healy's numbers and the need to move forward with an estimated \$135 million bond issue. The school district countered that doing nothing would result in a more costly option of using modular classrooms to meet increasing student populations.

During the July 21 board meeting, board members made it official by unanimously approving a motion to place a \$133.9 million, 8.3-mill bond issue on the Nov. 8 ballot.

Following the vote, board member Allison Fagan noted the bond issue's potential for significant negative impact on district residents' budgets.

"If people are interested in having conversations about ways to think outside of the box, on how to take care of ourselves as we move through this, I'm inter-

ested in exploring creative solutions," Fagan said.

"While none of us wants to pay more taxes, our board members, administrators, and the members of the facilities planning committee believe that these funds are critical to the district in order to maintain adequate facilities for our students as we grow," board president Mindy Meyer said. "As residents and taxpayers ourselves, we also know that strong schools are a huge contributing factor to maintaining our home values."

"Members of the committee considered numerous variations before making the recommendation that the board of education ultimately acted upon to place the bond on the ballot," Meyer said. "This was not a decision that we made lightly, but rather one that was made after studying the committee's recommendation, receiving input from our community via numerous community forums, and engaging in much deliberation and discussion. After working through that process, we feel confident that this bond will provide the necessary facilities for our students and our community."

Reporter Lenny C. Lepola can be reached at 614-266-6093

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