

Southeast OHIO

WINTER | SPRING 2017

ART HAPPENS

Blacksmithers, quilting queens,
a stained glass guru and more



Get in character with
scenes from the annual
BATTLE OF BUFFINGTON
reenactment weekend

Meet your local
PRAWN farmer

Pig out with our local
BARBECUE joints

Cheryl Greene's
GREENE BEANERY
in Peebles is the
roast of the town



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

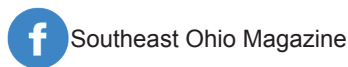
Throughout our lives, we constantly challenge ourselves to be better, to do more and to achieve higher. For me, these elements aligned with my responsibilities as editor-in-chief of *Southeast Ohio* magazine.

I've always been one to study the small snapshots in life, never the big picture. But as a senior, these small snapshots are finally coming together to create a career path I love.

I've always wanted to work alongside creative and talented people who are all working toward the same end goal. This class, these students, are that, and they are what make this job so gratifying.

MISSION STATEMENT

Southeast Ohio strives to spotlight the culture and community within our 21-county region. The student-run magazine aims to inform, entertain and inspire readers with stories that hit close to home.



A distinct characteristic of Southeast Ohio is its ability to affect people who call it home — even for just some of their life. Growing up in a city, I never imagined I would find such love for this region, but I was very wrong. Cleveland will always be my backbone, but Southeast Ohio is my heart and soul.

In this issue, we share fascinating portraits of the region's people. From the relentless drive of the 80-year-old gravedigger who still shovels dirt today (46), to the determined spirit of the Dunn family women who were plagued by the stigma of association (22), our stories reflect many of life's more teachable lessons.

Adams County's Greene Beanery (12), is a portrait of a dream-come-true, and a place which has quickly become a safe haven for many in the community. We also bring snapshots to satiate our historians with our trip to Buffington Island to experience a reenactment of the only major Civil War battle fought in the state (38).

So enjoy these stories and more. And wherever your own stories take you, don't forget to step back and consider how far you've come. You might be surprised by how much your own snapshots come together.

Although my graduation next semester means new beginnings and leaving this place I've grown to call home, I couldn't be more excited to see what's in store.

Happy Reading!

Southeast OHIO

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ON THE COVER

The Greene Beanery's Cheryl Greene.
Cover photo by Robert McGraw.

Photo, left | Greene and employee share a funny moment behind the counter at the Beanery. Page 12

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CONTENTS

THE SCENE

4. Lyrical Legacy Charlie's Red Star Blues Barn is one fun house of cool for area music lovers.

BEHIND THE BITE

6. Prawn Appetit Don's Prawns & More brings sustainable seafood to Ohio.



10. Tavern Tenacity Two bar managers overcome tragedy and revive Ohio's longest operating bar in Nelsonville.

12. Home Brewed One woman's dream to open a coffee house in Peebles becomes reality and provides a needed community space.

14. Grill Seeker Winding backroads lead to the region's best barbecue joints.

IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

16. Lore City Salt Fork State Park features beauty in every acre.

17. Athens Bodhi Tree Guesthouse and Studio offers guests an out-of-body experience.

18. Portsmouth Sudzy's Pin-Up Palace features clothes with moxie.



TALKING POINTS

19. Equity in Education After 20 years, how is the public support?

20. Building a Foundation Jackson County residents continue a commitment to helping the local homeless.

22. An Upward Bound Bond For the Dunn family women, mutual support and a strong mindset is what matters most.

FEATURES

26. Building Brilliance New federal dollars will link "makerspaces" and Innovation Centers to create jobs and encourage investment.

28. ART HAPPENS

30. Finding New Threads A St. Clairsville mother-daughter duo bring new material to the regional quilting scene.

31. Old School Cool A blacksmith artisan in McConnelsville helps revitalize the 19th century metal practice.

32. Crafted Culture Local art teachers go beyond classroom instruction to offer art lessons to the Lancaster community.

33. Let the Light In One man's career change brings a resurgence of stained glass making to Chillicothe.



34. Tales from the Farm Discover the rich history of three local family farms celebrating centennial and bicentennial birthdays this year.

38. Civil Society Take an upclose and personal journey with the reenactment of the American Civil War's Battle of Buffington Island.

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

46. A Grounded Gentleman Sixty years in the making, Dorsell Bibbee continues diggin' dirt.





PHOTO | Johnny Rawls performs at Charlie's Red Star Blues Barn in Meigs County.



LYRICAL LEGACY

Once a home for horses,
Charlie's Red Star Blues Barn
now hosts biannual Foothills
Music Foundation events

BY KAYLA BLANTON | PHOTO BY MARLENA SLOSS

Barefoot children scurry gleefully along rolling hills and hungry families gather at picnic tables, while roars of applause, singing and whistling celebrate a fiery bluegrass guitarist inside.

A structure that was once home to 2,000 hay bales — and long before that, prohibition bootleggers — on Jared Sheets' fifth-generation family farm in Meigs County is now Charlie's Red Star Blues Barn, the namesake of Sheets' grandfather, and the product of the Foothills Music Foundation.

"We started [the foundation] in 2006 with a goal of promoting music and the arts in Southeast Ohio," Sheets says.

Before the barn's reconstruction, the family's over 700-acre farm was the setting for the annual music festival, which ended in 2011 after upwards of 5,000 people attended. The Sheets then decided to reevaluate the use of their land. "When it's not fun, that's when it's tough to keep it going," Sheets says.

After a year of prioritizing and renovating, the family was ready to host music lovers once again — this time, at Charlie's Place. The barn was outfitted as a concert space, and Sheets says he hopes it can make the same impression that the festival did, just on a smaller scale. Today, the Sheets schedule two music events per year, and guests can bring their own dinner and a growler filled to the brim.

While the events are open to all, the Sheets offer advice to first-time attendees: Skip the GPS navigation for your journey and instead follow the directions posted on their website (foothillsmusic.org). Then, along the dusty winding roads of Harrisonville, look for signs that bare Charlie's red star to guide your way.

PRAWN APPÉTIT

What was once his backyard became the ground for his local aquaculture business, Don's Prawns & More

BY ALEX WARNER | PHOTOS BY ERICA BRETHELSBAUER



The phrase Fairfield County farmer Don Maloney is fond of saying is, "If you like shrimp, then you'll love prawns." Of course, Maloney isn't a conventional corn-and-cabbage farmer; rather he harvests freshwater prawns.

On this fall day, stationed at Maloney's prawn sorting table is 8-year-old Zoe Gardner. "Look at these," she says, shaking two prawns in the air. Gardner and other workers sift through the bins of prawns, sorting the small and large to be bagged and sold. "Yeah this is definitely a large," Gardner says while weighing a prawn on the scale.

The idea to invest in aquaculture came to him in 2001 while listening to WCBE's talk radio show, which included an announcement from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources that freshwater prawns could be harvested in the state. In 2010, when Maloney was brainstorming ideas for new income streams, he decided to try aquaculture.

He first built his pond, and three years later, he secured a microloan that funded the creation of two larger ponds. By chance, his name fit perfectly with his job, giving the operation, located just outside West Rushville, its name: Don's Prawns and More.

According to the Natural Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, nearly 90 percent of seafood is imported from outside United States borders, coming from countries like China, Thailand and Indonesia, where sustainability practices can vary. By growing locally, Maloney can produce prawns through a natural process without preservatives.

The work involves enough heavy lifting to employ not one, but two right hand men — Jay Picklesimer and Dana Widener — to help with the upkeep process. Maloney begins in early June by placing prawns in the ponds at just about a half-inch long. "When you lay them in your hand, the only thing you can see is their two beady little eyes," Picklesimer says.

During the harvest, each pond is drained into a smaller pit. Local high school students with Future Farmers of America climb down into the pits and use large rakes to scoop live prawns into laundry baskets.

“We've won three [grants], which is unheard of. But the beauty of our operation is that we have two identical ponds so we can do testing here.”

DON MALONEY
Don's Prawns, owner

From there, the prawns are thoroughly rinsed twice and dipped into a chilled bath. The deceased prawns are then sorted by size. The team weighs the prawns in grams to decide the approximate size — small being anything under 15 grams and large being anything above 30 grams.

Since Maloney's start in aquaculture, the Sustainable Agriculture and Research Education program has been a tremendous help to Don's Prawns. "We've won three [grants], which is unheard of. But the beauty of our operation is that we have two identical ponds so we can do testing here," Maloney says. The most recently gifted grant money was used to test aerator pumps, which ended up killing a fair amount of prawns from asphyxiation.

"That's the whole idea, you learn from your mistakes," Maloney says. The entire process has been a learning experience for him. Now after six years of experience, Maloney has built a more effective system and gathered a trusty team. Widener has been working with Maloney from the beginning. "We've come a long way from when we first started," he says.

Even today, they are still testing the waters with aquaculture. Maloney hasn't used each pond to its fullest capacity because he's trying to determine the local demand for prawns. Right now he's breaking even. With high hopes for more distribution at events like the Ohio Fish and Shrimp Festival in Urbana every September, Maloney believes he'll soon be able to profit from his hard work.

"It's farming and it's a gamble." However, for the near future, Maloney says he will continue to place his bets on freshwater prawns.

OPPOSITE PAGE | Don Maloney (center) stands proudly holding two harvested prawns, with friends Dana Wilder (left) and Jay Picklesimer (right) who help with the harvesting. BELOW | Eight-year-old Zoe Gardner sits at the sorting table, weighing and bagging prawns.



DON'S PRAWN FACTS

- The typical gestation period is 110 days
- Prawns cannot survive in water temperatures below 55 degrees Fahrenheit, which is why Don's Prawns must harvest on the second Saturday of September each year
- Prawn meat is tender, similar to lobster meat
- Don's Prawns are grown with no preservatives, making them 100 percent sustainable



PHOTO | One of the drained ponds makes a nice pit of mud to play in.





PHOTO | Bartender Ryan Wolfe talks to patrons.

TAVERN TENACITY

Owners of Ohio's longest operating bar tend to the reins after a family tragedy

STORY BY MARISA SALOPEK | PHOTOS BY MATT STARKEY

Distinction, reputation and prestige are not qualities a local business easily acquires. And as illustrated by the determined longevity of The Mine Tavern in Nelsonville, these traits are not ones to give up.

Ohio's longest operating bar rebuilds and continues operations through changes in regional economy, national policies and even the tragic death of an owner. Open since 1842, The Mine Tavern welds a rich history, witnessing coal mining to the prohibition era and the many headlines since.

"The only history that we understand that has been passed down from elders is it started as a dining hall for the hotel," says The Mine Tavern co-manager Joseph Koker.

The Mine Tavern has been passed down and operated through seven different families since its inception. Koker and co-manager Andrea Conner took the helm in 2016 after the 2015 shooting death of previous owner, Tim Koker, Joseph's brother and Conner's ex-husband.

Since acquiring the bar, they have only changed the location of the kitchen and added an outdoor patio, not-

ing that they like to keep the design as it's always been. Koker says previous customers come in and admire the same unique ceiling design they sat under years ago. They also opted to keep the kitchen open later than before, noticing an increase in the sales of their food.

"It's been the same forever," Conner says. "We're finding out that it is actually very important because for people that's part of the draw for why they come in, kind of to see the décor."

But what both Koker and Conner say has been the most compelling aspect to the business is the bright personalities of the owners throughout the years. Koker says after the loss of his brother, fully reopening and getting the tavern back under their feet was difficult, and they restarted by only being open one day a month.

"Tim had such a large personality," Koker says. "His personality actually was much larger than the business. Most of the owners in the past and the owners that I remember, all of their personalities were larger than the business, so that's hard to overcome."

“Most of the owners in the past and the owners that I remember, all of their personalities were larger than the business, so that’s hard to overcome.”

JOSEPH KOKER,
The Mine Tavern, co-manager

Both Koker and Conner find many guests come in nostalgic, having visited 30 years ago when they were in college, happy to see the bar has not changed. Patrons can still find the “Best Burger In Town” sign sitting outside the tavern.

Koker says Tim previously catered to an older crowd, having the same regulars in every day, and even gave keys to several guys to come in and make coffee before they opened in the morning. Now, Koker says that with their promotion and use of social media, they’ve been able to cater to a younger crowd for the first time. The tavern hosts a wide variety of guests on any given day from college-aged students, to locals and blue-collar workers.

“It’s nice that we can have locals, plus you can have an executive in here at the same time all eating lunch or drinking a beer and hanging out that it works,” Conner says.

Considering the economic turmoil in Southeast Ohio, The Mine Tavern emphasizes the importance of serving and offering a menu at affordable prices. “It is important because we want all classes to be able to come in and eat and drink and we try to keep prices pretty low, or at least comparable with other places in town,” Conner says.

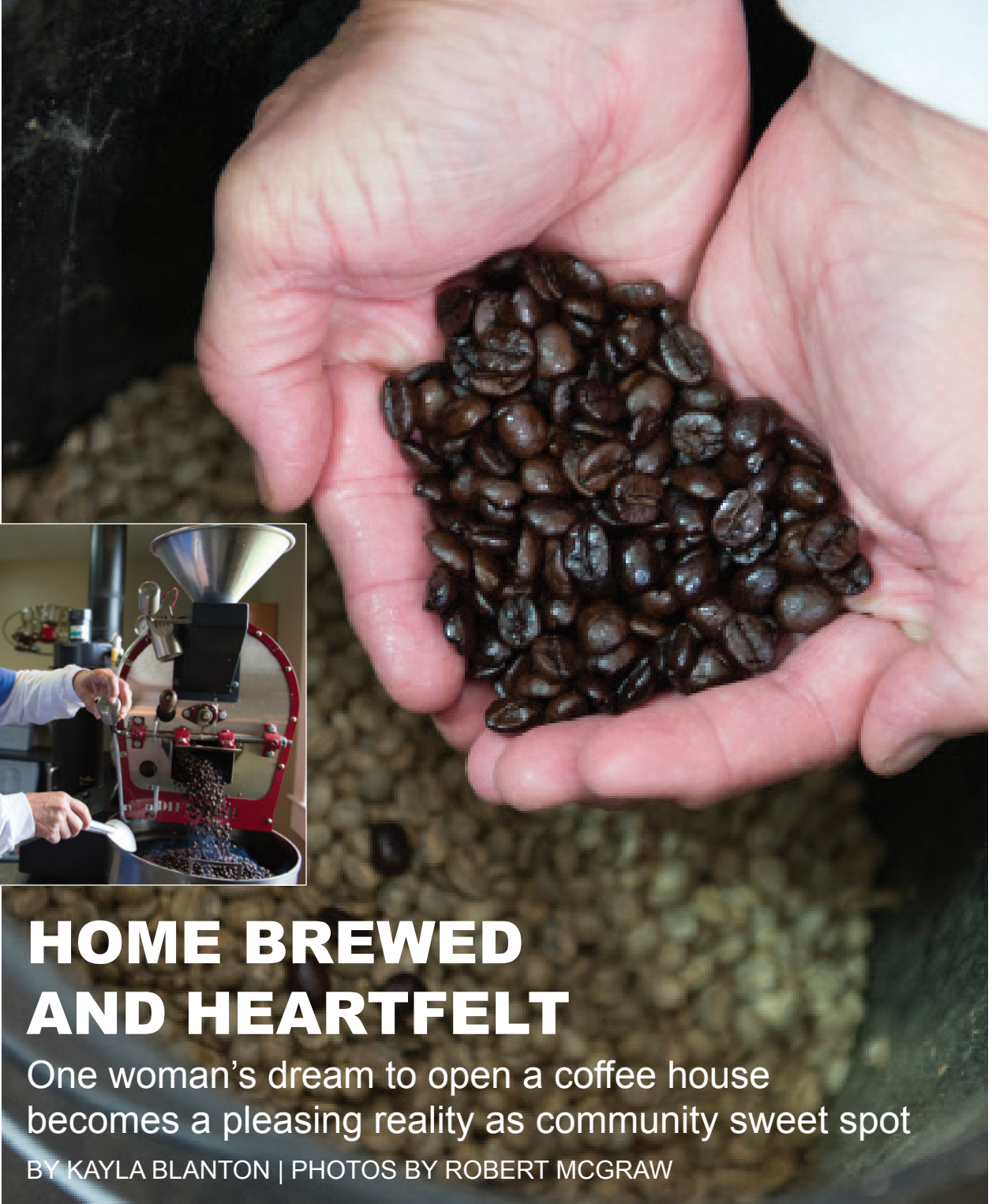
The Mine Tavern is located at 14 Public Square in Nelsonville. The operating hours are 10 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. If you’re looking for a juicy burger, a cold beer or just some good company, The Mine Tavern remains ready to serve.

PHOTO | Tap handles stand ready.



PHOTO | Brittany Mittler lines up a shot at The Mine Tavern in Nelsonville, Ohio.





HOME BREWED AND HEARTFELT

One woman's dream to open a coffee house becomes a pleasing reality as community sweet spot

BY KAYLA BLANTON | PHOTOS BY ROBERT MCGRAW

Perhaps Peebles resident coffee entrepreneur Cheryl Greene should thank her sister for a serving mistake made long ago.

Specifically, Cheryl was in her early 20s when her sister gave her a sugar-loaded cup o' joe that was intended for their mother, who had requested it black. As she sipped away blissfully, Cheryl envisioned a new life dream to open a coffee shop one day.

Cheryl took the first step in 2012 when she visited Idaho, home of Diedrich Roasters. There, she learned all about the roasting process. "At the time I thought, 'Wow, if I do actually learn this I will feel like I've accomplished something great,'" she says.

Cheryl returned home to Adams County and ordered a roaster of her own: the IR-2.5, which produces five

pounds of freshly roasted beans per batch. She began sourcing Ethiopian, Guatemalan and Brazilian raw beans from different coffee companies and tried her hand at roasting and selling them with the help of local businesses such as the town's Ace Hardware, and the local Amish establishments Keim Family Market and Miller's Bakery.

But, Cheryl had her eye on a permanent home for her business, The Greene Beanery Coffee Roastery. A former bed and breakfast on State Route 41 is a perfect distance from Highway 32 to serve long-distance travelers, and it nearly occupies the front yard of the local high school, convenient for students and teachers. The building's covered front porch beckons rocking chair-sitting and coffee-sipping, and its blue tin roof practically disappears into the sky on a clear day.



OPPOSITE PAGE | Coffee shop owner Cheryl Greene holds a handful of freshly roasted coffee beans that have a dark, toasty color compared to the raw beans below.

OPPOSITE PAGE INSET | Steam rolls off of freshly roasted coffee beans as they spill out of Cheryl Greene's Diedrich IR-2.5 coffee bean roaster.

LEFT | Mother and daughter Sarah Howard, left, and Carol Clemenson, right, enjoy coffee, dulcimer playing and conversation with friends.

BOTTOM | Cheryl Greene's business is in a former bed and breakfast on State Route 41 in Peebles.

"I always knew if I had a coffee shop, it had to be this house," Cheryl says. In mid-2014, the price was right, and Cheryl purchased the property.

Cheryl's family helped her finish what she started. "My three older sisters were right here with me," she says, along with her husband, Matthew Greene. Together, they picked out paint colors and constructed coat racks and chalkboard signs out of reclaimed wood from the house. "[It was] all of our family giving each gift they had to bring to the table," says Cheryl's sister, Connie Greene.

During its first year open in February of 2015, the coffee shop began serving a deeper purpose. "We had [our dad's] 80th birthday here," says another sister, Cindy Wilson. Their father died suddenly in July, and the sisters planted a tree in the shop's yard in his memory.

The sisters hope others in Adams County use the roastery to also cultivate human connections. "I see her

place becoming like the heartbeat of the community for gatherings, whether it's one-on-one with a cup of coffee and quiet conversation, or a group of friends celebrating," Connie says. "It's going to continue to grow a stronger pulse over the years."

Cheryl wants her shop to be "a place for people to come, people who are hurting. Adams County is a very low-income county, a lot of poverty," she says. "People just need an outlet." The shop has a box for people to submit their written prayer concerns. "That to me, is what I want to be about: showing people love when they need it."

As heart and soul of Cheryl's business grows, she acknowledges the eventual need to expand her roasting beyond the usual five pounds of coffee per batch. "I would like to be able to roast 25 pounds at a time," she says. But for now, Cheryl says her regulars seem satisfied savoring the shop's modest batches: "This way, it's always fresh."





GRILL SEEKER

BY ALICIA MACDONALD | PHOTOS BY ROBERT MCGRAW

When it comes to sweet, spicy, finger-lickin' delicious barbecue, it's likely Southeast Ohio isn't the first place that comes to mind.

But hidden along the rolling hills and winding backroads of the region lie some of Ohio's most enticing BBQ joints that combine locally-sourced ingredients with tried-and-true recipes passed down through the generations. Their barbecue powerhouse proof is in the customers, which in this case reside in both the region and beyond — such as Texas and Florida.

"Barbecue is a food that people will travel a long way to eat," says Rowdy's Smokehouse owner Nathan Kitts. "If you want to do it right, you can do it in Maine or Southern Ohio. It's really the effort that you put in it."

So, move over Memphis, Southeast Ohio requests a seat at the table. On our menu is four barbecue joints to drive for.

MILLSTONE SOUTHERN SMOKED BARBECUE

Looking to spend a weekend in the Hocking Hills? Make a pit stop at this barbecue staple off Route 33 in Logan. Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, Millstone uses locally sourced hickory to smoke pork, beef and chicken for the folks of Southeast Ohio to savor.

Millstone's meat crew prepares its three Southern Pride smokers each night, allowing the dry-rubbed meat to smoke and develop flavor for up to 14 hours. The menu features nearly 15 satisfying options for side dishes, including french fries, coleslaw and macaroni and cheese, several of which are gluten-free choices.

"We wanted a sit down restaurant with a variety of food so that somebody who didn't like smoked meat could get something else to eat," says Millstone's managing member, William Birch. "When people come in here, they know that they're going to have friendly service and food they can rely on to be good."

12790 Grey Street, Logan | (740) 385-5341
millstonebbq.com.

ROWDY'S SMOKEHOUSE

With an 'if you're not wearing it, you're doing something wrong' mentality, Rowdy's aspires to provide customers with a place to relax and pig out on Jackson County's tastiest barbecue.

Since diving head first into the restaurant industry three years ago, the Smokehouse has brought a whirlwind of attention to barbecue cookin' in Southeast Ohio. Named after owner Nathan Kitts' son, Rowdy's is embracing the cult-following that barbecue possesses, and is bringing that fan base to the region.

Located right off Route 93, customers are greeted by the rustic façade, cornhole boards and smell of good ol' barbecue. For Rowdy's, barbecue is all about having solid recipes and a comfortable place to eat them. The menu required a lot of trial and error, but that attention to detail is what led the restaurant to sell out everyday for the first eight-to-ten months it was open.

"I've always said that I want a guy wearing a suit to be able to come in and sit down beside a guy wearing shorts and both of them be able to be comfortable," says Kitts. "I just want it to be a place where people can gather and relax."

495 Ralph Street, Jackson | (740) 286-2270
rowdyssmokehouse.com

THE SCIOTO RIBBER

A barbecue gem a rocks toss from the Ohio River, The Scioto Ribber is the place to go for comfort food with a side of southern charm.

Scioto has been smoking meat since 1978 and it shows in the craftsmanship and portions of the entrees. The kind of restaurant where you can sit down, eat a ribeye, and listen to "You Give Love a Bad Name" by Bon Jovi, Scioto is bound to leave a BBQ imprint on your mind and taste buds.

All meat is smoked behind the restaurant in one of nine smokers, five of which run at all times. Customers who enter through the back door can see the meat being smoked and smell its sweet, smoky aroma up close.



OPPOSITE PAGE | *The Scioto Ribber grills hundreds of pounds of meat each day on one of their nine smokers.*

TOP | *A customer from Rowdy's points up to one of the hanging dollars from the ceiling claiming it is hers.*

TOP MIDDLE | *Allison Haddix, 2, and her mother Kimberly Haddix, right, enjoy a barbecue lunch at Rowdy's Smokehouse.*

TOP RIGHT | *Robert Matarazzo gets an ice cream cone from Abbie Davis, right, at Grillin' Dave-Style's drive thru.*

From the authentic taste of the food, to the laughing and talking amongst customers, Scioto aims to give visitors the home-cooked meal they don't always have the time to prepare.

"We're kind of in the Bible Belt, where everyone comes together to eat, especially on Sundays," says Scioto Ribber waitress Kirsten Crock. "I want our customers to have an experience that they haven't had anywhere else. Everyone's ate steak and ribs, but nobody has had our quality of steak or ribs."

1026 Gallia Street, Portsmouth | (740) 353-9329

GRILLIN' DAVE-STYLE

If you're in need of a quick bite on-the-go, opt for Grillin' in Zanesville. This roadside dive — the one with the life-size pig statue out front — has attracted locals and tourists for its smoked prime rib and leg of lamb since 2007.

Combining fast food, drive-thru service and barbecue, Grillin' Dave-Style brings quality, smoked meat to the comfort of your front seat. With a sprawling menu that offers smoked chicken, pork and brisket, Grillin' also serves up smoked salmon, fried bologna and 33 flavors of soft serve ice cream.

Seating inside is limited; however, the outside picnic tables— covered in red and white checkered tablecloths— will make you feel right at home.

Grillin's quick service and consistent quality are what makes this fast food BBQ joint one to keep coming back to. "You see the same people every single day and they come and get the same thing," says Grillin' Dave Style manager Cami Wilson. "That's just what we serve and they know us from that."

1612 Linden Avenue, Zanesville | (740) 452-3808
grillindavestyle.com

BARBECUE BY REGION

We've pinpointed four of the nation's most popular barbecue styles, making your search for a palate pleaser as simple as smothering more sauce on a pulled pork sandwich.

THE CAROLINAS

Barbecue is all about pork in this region. Vinegar-based North Carolina and mustard-based South Carolina barbecue sauces distinguish the region's hot, sour & sweet flavors. The meat is cooked over fire, never gas.

For a taste **Millstone's Carolina Smoked Pulled Pork, \$12.99**

MEMPHIS

Bring on the ribs, baby. In this region it's all about the pork ribs, cooked sticky or dry. The sauce is tomato-based, which gives it a sweet, smoky flavor. Here meat is smoked using either hickory or oak wood chips.

For a taste **Scioto Ribber's Three Piece Country-Cut Rib Dinner, \$16.35**

KANSAS CITY

The best of both Carolina & Texas, with pork & beef concoctions flavored with sweet, tomato-based barbecue sauce that inspired Kraft-brand BBQ sauce. The flavor is a little sweet, a little sour, with a dash of spice.

For a taste **Grillin' Dave-Style's Big Pork & Slaw, \$7.29**

TEXAS

As the cattle capital of the country, it's no surprise this region specializes in beef. The sauce tends to be a blend of ketchup, vinegar and water, which makes the flavor both savory & sweet. The meat is smoked with mesquite wood chips for a smoky, tangy flavor

For a taste **Rowdy's Smokehouse's Beef Brisket, \$5.95**

Source: Celebrating Barbecue: The Ultimate Guide to America's Four Regional Styles of 'Cue by Dotty Griffith

UNREFINED ELEGANCE

Salt Fork State Park is Ohio's crown jewel, acre upon acre

BY MICHAEL SLEVIN | PHOTO BY JORGE CASTILLO

Webster's New World College Dictionary defines "gem" two ways: "A cut and polished gemstone or a pearl, used for ornamentation," and "Anything prized for its beauty and value, esp. if small and perfect of its kind."

Within the parameters of these definitions, Salt Fork State Park is a gem of its own.

"It's almost like we have our own little city here," Regional Park Manager Adam Sikora says. "[Salt Fork] is the largest state park in Ohio. Another interesting thing about Salt Fork is our agreement that we have with the [Ohio] Division of Wildlife," Sikora says. The Division of Wildlife maintains food plots for doves, turkeys and deer, among various other animals on the park's premises.

According to the Division of Wildlife's website, it manages over three-quarters of a million acres of diverse wildlife lands throughout the state. In addition to maintaining animal population, the Division of Wildlife works to improve the actual habitats of the animals through stream improvements or pollution investigation.

"Salt Fork is the crowned jewel as far as Ohio state parks go," Sikora says. This title is thanks to the distinctive geological properties of the park. In 2009 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources took a geological survey and published a study, titled *Geology of a Rare Gem: Salt Fork State Park*, that detailed some of what makes Salt Fork so special.

"Shelter caves and massive sandstone ledges exist throughout the park. Noteworthy places to explore include the rocky gorges, caves and cascades of the cottage area west of the golf course," writes author and former state geologist Larry Wickstrom.

OFF THE TRAIL

Salt Fork offers a gorgeous setting alongside a vast array of activities, including horseback riding, camping and golfing. But perhaps the most interesting activity in the park is gem mining, where kids can learn about various gemstones, fossils and arrowheads.

The park purchases bags of rough from Sandy Creek Mining Company in Fostoria, Ohio. It is the kids' job to go through their bag of rough, separating sand from the gems, fossils or arrowheads inside.

The kids will then go to the sluice, which is a small water tower that rushes water through the sand, leaving only the gemstones or fossils behind after sifting. These gems are referred to as "tailings," meaning they are stones that are not gem quality. These gems either can't be polished or are too small.

Someone participating in this activity could expect to find coveted gems such as emerald, onyx, ruby, sapphire and crystal points, in addition to such fossils as amber, trilobite and coral. These are just a few of the 42 potential gems or fossils that one could find in their bag of rough.

Although the gem mining activity attracts visitors from spring through early fall, the real gem is the natural beauty of all 20,000 plus acres of park grounds.

Salt Fork's beauty is tucked away in hidden caves and verdant forests. Seemingly endless trails are densely populated with everything from moss-covered boulders to peaceful streams converging with fallen leaves.

Salt Fork's current beauty aligns with its legacy that includes prehistoric animals like the mastodon, hunting grounds for Native Americans, and in the 1870s, a prime location for the production of salt. Today, Salt Fork serves as a place for all Ohioans to take in the elegant grandeur that the state's largest park has to offer.

LEFT | Nancy and Joe Adams, a former employee and Ohio University alum, stop to fish at Salt Fork State Park on their way back home after visiting friends in Athens, Ohio.



Salt Fork State Park Trivia



- 3,000 acres of lake
- 17,000 acres of forest
- Its highest peak is 1,100 feet above sea level
- Salt Fork is largest of all 74 Ohio state parks
- When Salt Fork produced salt in the 1870s, a barrel of salt cost \$2
- The park was given its name to honor the natural salt springs in the area

A HILLTOP HAVEN

Athens' Bodhi Tree Guesthouse offers relaxation and an out-of-body experience

BY SARAH WEINGARTEN |
PHOTO BY SALGU WISSMATH

Overlooking the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains and removed from the college bustle of uptown Athens is the Bodhi Tree Guesthouse and Studio, an Athens County nirvana of sorts.

The wellness retreat's owners, Liz and Russell Chamberlain, opened Bodhi Tree in September 2014 as an all-in-one guesthouse, with rooms to rent on Airbnb and a yoga studio.

Today, the business offers guests a newly constructed studio separate from the guesthouse, a sustainable organic farm in the front of the property, plus a few other mind and body inspirations.

The barn-red guesthouse is the first thing visitors will see once they arrive. Just a quick walk past the sustainable garden, lined with evergreens, is where the new studio is located. The studio has a large welcoming porch that the Chamberlain's dog, Path, likes to sunbathe and nap on. It houses a yoga room, meditation area, Thai body work room, massage therapy room and a float tank.

The float tank, in its own room and available to use for an hour basis for \$60, is a pod-shaped tank with a lid that is filled with 1,000 pounds of Epsom salt and kept at 94.5 degrees Fahrenheit, about skin temperature.

Float tanks were developed in 1954 by Dr. John Lilly, who was testing how the brain reacts when deprived of its senses. From that hypothesis, he created sensory deprivation tanks, better known as float tanks.

Today, these devices have been primarily used for meditation and relaxation. The float tank at Bodhi Tree is the only one open to the public in Southeast Ohio. "[Russell and I] both floated a few times at other places but nowhere near here," Liz says, citing Dayton as the closest location at the time of their purchase.

However, this location has also posed challenges. "It is a rural area. People don't have the kind of disposable income that people have in cities," Liz says. "We get a lot of people who are treating themselves once in a while and aren't here every week or every month."

A single float is \$60 for one hour, but Bodhi Tree also offers a discounted three series float for \$120. "It's buy two get one free. We really try to encourage people to do that," Liz says.

However, the initial purchase of a float tank is a pricey investment. "It's like buying a car. They have a range,



ABOVE | Liz Chamberlain, owner of Bodhi Tree Guesthouse and Studio, gets mindful near a reflection pool between the guesthouse and the studio.

you can get one for \$11,000 or \$20,000," Liz says. Despite the expense, Liz and Russell were curious of the tank's benefits and overall potential at their studio.

"Many people feel like they have a terrible time meditating, that it feels impossible," Liz says. Float tanks fill that meditation gap. It creates a perfect, senseless meditating environment that can make it easier for someone to reach a state of bliss.

"Sitting on a cushion is in some ways a more alert and wakeful style of meditation," Liz says. "When you're doing your float all of that external stuff is gone so everything that is arising is pretty much coming from within your own mind."

ROYAL CONFIDENCE

Portsmouth boutique promotes body positivity and personal style

BY HAILEY HRYNEWICH

As you walk through the doors of Sudzy's Pin-Up Palace, a red and white polka dot dress beckons for your attention.

But before you can even touch its fabric, racks featuring dresses of seemingly every color interrupt your gaze. This cacophony of color, pattern and fit is both modern and 1950s-inspired fashion.

"My favorite thing of Sudzy's is her dresses," Emily Nickell, a friend of Sudzy's says. "Every time I go into the store, I find a new dress I fall in love with. I just want to have everything in there."

This is the new Pin-Up Palace of Scioto County, located in downtown Portsmouth. The palace opened on Aug. 27, 2016 and it's far from your everyday clothing store seen at the mall. As illustrated by the baby blue dress with the red bow at its waist, Sudzy's is anything but ordinary.

The store features an array of dresses in every size and style imaginable. Even women who aren't accustomed to the vintage style of most of the apparel can walk away with something that they love.

Photographs strategically grace the store's walls, and many feature Sudzy modeling various outfits of her own pin-up style. Portraits of women flaunting their outfits is how the term "pin-up" came to fruition in the late 19th century, so the images are Sudzy's way of promoting body positivity within her store.

"I don't know how many times I have gone into a store and been turned away because they didn't have my size," Sudzy says. "The world is tough enough as it is for us women, and if we can all feel confident in our own skin, I think we as women can accomplish some really great things."

Sudzy carries sizes anywhere from extra small to 6XXL, and if she doesn't have someone's exact size, she is more than happy to order one. Sudzy purchases her merchandise from a variety of vendors, all with an eye for style and affordability.

With more time and investing into her store, Sudzy has plans to renovate a large room upstairs for a stage and



Photo courtesy of Sudzy Nixon. Hair: Cat Monster. MUA: Makeup Vamp. Photo: Laura Dark Photography

runway for women to show off their favorite outfits and for body positive speakers to share their stories.

For now, Sudzy's Pin-Up Palace will remain the most colorful and comfortable shopping destination in downtown Portsmouth.

"I want women to come in to my store and be able to find at least one thing they fall in love with," Sudzy says. "Something that not only fits them but makes them feel beautiful and confident too."

THE STATE OF PUBLIC SUPPORT

Local coalitions grapple with new challenges 20 years after a landmark case about school funding

BY MEGAN FAIR

Natural light from a tall corner window bathes Cindy Hartman's office. Piles of papers and folders dot her desk, and a colorful map of Ohio hangs on the wall.

Hartman spent 36 years educating and holding administrative roles in Appalachian schools in Southeast Ohio. For someone who retired in 2008 from her position as superintendent of Southern Local Schools in Perry County, Hartman's surroundings communicate business.

Indeed, Hartman now works as associate director of the Coalition of Rural and Appalachian Schools (CORAS), an organization composed of superintendents from 32 counties who gather once a month to tackle the problems facing their school districts. "Many of these families [in these districts] don't have very much, so kids come to school not ready to learn," Hartman says. "It's the school's work to catch them up, and then to support the things they just don't have access to at home."

Such is the challenge for what the state legislators refer to as "low resource" schools, characterized by traits such as their low economic base or minimal access to cultural experiences like plays or concerts.

When CORAS was established in 1988 its goal was advocating for the continuing improvement of public school education. The members of CORAS collaborated with educators statewide to form another team for student advocacy, the Ohio Coalition for Equity & Adequacy of School Funding (OCEASF), with a specific vision in mind.

The OCEASF planned to sue the state for its property tax-based school funding model, as it greatly disadvantaged already-underprivileged students.

In 1991, the coalition filed a lawsuit against the state of Ohio in the name of Perry County resident and then 15-year-old student Nathan DeRolph and argued the funding model for public education was unconstitutional. In 1997, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled in its favor, writing "... property taxes can no longer be the primary means of

providing the finances for a thorough and efficient system of schools." The battle continued in appeals until 2003, when the court ruled that it was the legislature's job to fix the funding model.

Bill Phillis has been the executive director of the OCEASF since 1992 when the DeRolph case was first taking shape. He's paid close attention to the attempts made to rectify the state's educational funding model since the initial DeRolph decision.

"To the state's credit, in 1997 [after the conclusion of the DeRolph case] they put together a school facilities committee," Phillis says. That group used a tobacco tax windfall to invest in constructing new school buildings.

"Thanks to DeRolph, there are over 1000 new school buildings," Phillis says. "This was an important moment, because a congressional study at the time showed Ohio had the worst public school buildings in the nation."

Although many public school facilities have improved, the existing funding model for academic expenses remains problematic. It is not entirely dependent on property taxes and property values, but those elements are still factored into funding decisions.

Further complicating the equation is charter schools, which many view as culprit for cuts to the area's already stretched public education funds. "Some of these schools can't afford a guidance counselor or social worker. There's a growing drug problem in these counties, and some schools don't have the resources to help students grapple with what they're seeing at home," Hartman says.

While the funding model may be broken, the fight for equity in education largely resides outside classroom walls. "Despite the challenges these districts face, when you observe a classroom and see the teachers interacting with their students, magic is happening," Hartman says with a hopeful smile.

No doubt it is such images that keep individuals like Hartman and Phillis motivated 25 years and counting.

COALITION OF RURAL AND APPALACHIAN SCHOOLS (CORAS)

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coalition is to advocate for and support the public schools of rural and Appalachia Ohio in the continuous improvement of educational opportunities available to the region's children and youth. The Coalition also may support and join with similar efforts throughout the state to improve educational opportunities for all children.

GOALS

1. To seek equity in school funding and adequacy of educational opportunity for all of Ohio's children.
2. To support the development of educational leadership throughout the region's public school system.
3. To identify and analyze critical policy issues and questions which impact upon the effectiveness, strength and character of the public school system and to facilitate public discussion of these issues.
4. To promote the production and use of research and sharing of successful practices related to improving educational opportunities of children and youth in rural and Appalachia Ohio.

BUILDING A FOUNDATION

Jackson County residents work to build houses and futures for those trying to get back on their feet

BY OLIVIA BOWER | PHOTOS BY ROBERT MCGRAW

Standing on a stage under fluorescent lights in the gym of the Jackson area YMCA, Mark Horvath looks at the Hope for the Homeless fundraiser patrons. On the wall behind him rests stacks of red plastic chairs. He glances at the notes laying at his feet. He takes a breath and says, “We’ve got to find a solution. And the good news, I think, is you.”

Horvath, founder of the national nonprofit Invisible People, spoke about strategy. He noted how many communities deal with homelessness by criminalizing the homeless or just ignoring them. However, Horvath commended Jackson County’s Homelessness Committee (JCHC) for reacting in a different way — acknowledging homelessness and working to solve it.





OPPOSITE PAGE | Shelia Price works on a Sudoku puzzle in her home, which she moved into after her mobile home burned down last June. TOP LEFT | Jackson County Homelessness Committee Executive Director Laura Fain unlocks the door to a transitional home built by Sojourners YouthBuild. CENTER | Don Denny and Shelia Price laugh in the yard outside of their transitional home provided by Jackson County Homelessness Committee. RIGHT | Don Denny and Shelia Price spend an afternoon on the porch of their transitional home.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Development's Annual Homeless Assessment Report, Ohio had 11,182 homeless people in 2015, representing an increase of 10 percent since 2007, the fourth largest increase in the country.

In larger cities like Columbus or Cleveland, homelessness is often publicly observable, for example, seeing people sleeping under bridges or panhandling.

But homelessness also exists in smaller, rural communities, says Jackson County Homelessness Committee Executive Director Laura Fain, manifest by people sleeping in tents in the woods, or in their cars, or couch surfing at relatives' or friends' homes.

Fain, who started working with the committee in 2015, admits she, too, was blind to the problem when she first heard about the homelessness committee. "I chuckled because I thought, 'We don't have a homeless community. There's no homeless in Jackson County,'" she remembers.

Though a majority of the 483 callers who contacted JCHC last year had stable housing and only asked for help with food, rent and utilities, some needed help with housing. Forty-six Jackson County callers who reached out to the committee that year were homeless, says Fain.

The idea for last September's "Hope for the Homeless" fundraiser developed after other Jackson County events proved effective. For example, a previous event called "Cardboard City" involved a group of Girl Scouts sleeping under cardboard in a nearby park to raise awareness about the county's homeless population.

Such tactics inspire area residents such as fundraiser attendee Sherry Williams, of Oak Hill, to become

involved and invested in JCHC's future. "It's definitely something to grow in," she says.

The committee certainly fulfills a community need. Because Jackson County lacks a homeless shelter, JCHC provides transitional housing for people who qualify. One plot of land was donated earlier this year by the Jackson Area Festivals and Events Committee to use for transitional housing, and JCHC partnered with Sojourners Youthbuild, a development program out of MacArthur for Appalachian youth, to build a two-bedroom house on another of JCHC's two lots.

For Don Denny and Shelia Price, JCHC was exactly what the couple needed after losing their mobile home to a fire. The transitional housing provides them with a place to live as they try to build a new home.

JCHC also runs a food pantry and helps to pay bills. Local businesses, churches and schools collect donations for the food pantry, located in a room of the basement of Christ United Methodist Church.

The common component running through all of JCHC's efforts is community aid. When describing the efforts of JCHC in battling homelessness, Fain talks about people banding together to put forth a collective effort. The committee is a nonprofit organization, run from funds donated by community members. All of the board members are volunteers. People go in for three hours a day to answer phones. This community assistance keeps JCHC running, building not only finances but also morale.

"It shows how much Jackson County cares about its people," Fain says. "It's truly a community effort."



AN *UPWARD* BOUND BOND

Three Newport women lead exemplary lives despite the drug abuse and incarceration that has marked their family for years

STORY BY KELSIE RINARD | PHOTOS BY KELSIE RINARD AND THE DUNN FAMILY

It's almost dinnertime for the Dunn family in Newport and the scene is one familiar to any working parent. Toys scatter the home's living room floor, a giggling toddler stumbles around and children chase a kitten around the yard. Inside, a petite, dark-haired woman and two of her daughters sit around the kitchen table.

While this might sound like a contemporary Norman Rockwell setting, it's quite likely this particular family has overcome more adversity than most households.

Heather Dunn, 43, and two of her daughters, Meranda Murphy, 27, and Lea Dunn, 14, have witnessed their extended family get torn apart by drug abuse. Heather has separated from their father due to his multiple drug possession and trafficking charges and the daughters have cut contact with him.

Their third sister, Shay, is incarcerated as a result of drug possession and trafficking crack cocaine charges, leaving her 8-year-old son in Heather's care.

Despite these headline-ready situations, the three women say they have learned to cope with the social stigma that is associated with their last name.

"You have to work to prove yourself to even be looked at in an equal way," Heather says. "There was never an option to not rise above it."

Meranda exemplifies this strategy. As a graduate of Ohio State University, wife and mother of two, she cites her mindset to motivate as key.

"I really can't say that I ever felt like I wouldn't [rise above the stigma]," Meranda says. "As far as breaking the cycle for me, I have seen firsthand what breaking the law entails. I don't want my kids to feel the way I've

“As far as breaking the cycle for me, I have seen firsthand what breaking the law entails. I don’t want my kids to feel the way I’ve felt. I don’t want my kids to feel less than or ashamed of their family, so I chose to rise above it.”

MERANDA MURPHY, Daughter

felt. I don’t want my kids to feel less than or ashamed of their family, so I chose to rise above it.”

Meranda’s influence extends to her younger sister Lea who is in the midst of navigating the drama of high school. Lea, a freshman, says she feels embarrassed when other students mention her family’s drug usage so she is quick to disprove their assumptions about her.

“I feel like my last name is what people think gets you in trouble,” she says. “But I don’t think that’s true at all. I think it’s your behavior.” Lea’s successes reflect this philosophy. She is a 4.0 GPA student, a member of the volleyball team, and was elected as class representative on the homecoming court.

However, Heather has faced others’ perceptions since high school, when she had two children. Since that time, she’s devoted her efforts to raising her family.

“The people that know me and are close to me know that my kids are everything to me,” she says. “I put them first and their happiness means more to me than my happiness.”

Today, Heather balances working as a Physical Therapy Assistant and being a full-time mom to Lea and Tyce, Shay’s son who Heather gained full custody of two years ago.

Meranda says her mom’s gradual confidence helped forge a path toward personal achievements. “It took her until a little later in life to realize that she could do it. She could go back to school, she could do it on her own, and she did it,” Meranda says of her mother.

Despite such triumphs, Meranda says she feels disapproval still lurks in other ways. And in these cases, the logic may not be worth fighting for.

“For us we feel like the black sheep of the family,” Meranda says. “We get criticized for thinking we’re too good or we think we’re better for wanting differently for our kids, and that is really hard because we do love our family and wish them the best. But it doesn’t mean we have to be a part of that and we’re not the bad ones for wanting a healthy, normal lifestyle.”



OPPOSITE PAGE | Heather, middle, and daughters Meranda, right, and Lea, left, gather around the table at Heather’s home in Newport, Ohio. They look to each other for motivation and encouragement to rise above negative stigmas and false stereotypes.

LEFT | The mug is their message. The Dunn Family women look to each other for motivation and encouragement to rise above negative stigmas and false stereotypes.

You have to work to prove yourself to even be looked at in an equal way. There was never an option to not rise above it.”

HEATHER DUNN, Mother



TOP | Heather with Shay and Meranda in 1991.



TOP RIGHT | Heather and Lea in 2003.

RIGHT | Sisters Shay, left, Lea, center, and Meranda, right, in 2003.

OPPOSITE PAGE | Heather, right, works as a Physical Therapy Assistant as well as a full-time mom to daughter Lea, left, and grandson Tyce (8), middle, who she gained full custody of two years ago.





BUILDING BRILLIANCE

New federal dollars will link “makerspaces” and Innovation Centers to create jobs and encourage investment BY WES RATKO

Lyndon B. Johnson’s War on Poverty program began with a speech delivered in Athens, Ohio. While addressing a crowd on Ohio University’s main campus in May 1964, President Johnson kicked off his push to pass the signature legislative achievement of his presidency.

The legacy and effectiveness of that initiative remain controversial, but its impacts are still felt across Appalachia and Southeast Ohio.

That day, he said: “And with your courage and with your compassion and your desire, we will build the Great Society. It is a Society where no child will go unfed, and no youngster will go unschooled. Where no man who wants work will fail to find it.”

Among the programs to come out of that drive was the Appalachian Regional Commission, formed in 1965 to direct federal dollars to the 420 distressed counties along the rugged Appalachian mountain chain.

Last August, the ARC awarded a \$2 million grant to Ohio University’s Innovation Center to fund an initiative called Leveraging Innovation Gateways and Hubs Toward Sustainability (LIGHTS).

LIGHTS is a new program intended to strengthen the connections between pre-existing innovation hubs in Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky into a cohesive network that will provide expertise, training and resources to the regional workforce and the employers that hire them.

Stacy Strauss, newly-named director of the Ohio University Innovation Center, says the target is to create more than 1,100 new jobs, spawn 125 new businesses, and attract \$25 million in new investment across the 28-county region within a six-year period.

“It takes 3 to 5 years to establish a business, so the metrics go out to six years,” Strauss says, adding that the funding only lasts for three years. She also says that while there are no penalties if the metrics aren’t met. However, falling short of those goals could impede future efforts to apply for additional grants. Funding recipients will have a quarterly reporting requirement to report their progress.

To coordinate the use of grant funds, the Innovation Center will undergo some staff and service changes. New personnel will strategically engage with stakeholders in the service area.

Jen Simon, former director of the Innovation Center, will serve as executive director for regional innovation. Part of her role will be to establish corporate and community connections, ensure coordination between partners, and seek additional corporate funding. The Innovation Center has also hired Ariana Ulloa-Olavarrieta as an executive coach and Nathaniel Berger, an engineering and design consultant.

“The logic is that to take people who have always worked with their hands — in industries like coal mining or energy distribution — and tweak it so they can still work with their hands,” Strauss says.

The Innovation Center’s role will be to distribute those funds to users like the Athens MakerSpace and the IDEA lab at Zane State among others, based on the roles each will play in the network. The grant will be used to hire staff and provide equipment and material support. The initiative is not limited to for-profit enterprises. “The ARC believes that any job is a job,” Strauss says.

LEFT | Colton Nissen, a 2016 graduate from Ohio University’s Russ College of Engineering and Technology, is insulating and heat tracking a section of the supercritical water reactor that is designed to remediate flow back water—from horizontally drilled, hydraulically fractured shale wells. (Photo courtesy of Ohio University)



Strauss added that this will enable the Innovation Center to work with any type of entrepreneur beyond the technology sector. They also hope to see businesses that use 3-D printing, carpentry and small-batch manufacturing. The grant will not focus on food, retail or wellness, areas that are already provided for with funds from the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks (ACEnet).

Two such hubs include Ohio University's Innovation Center and the Muskingum County Business Incubator (MCBI), which have a long history of cooperation.

Headed by Executive Director Larry Triplett, the MCBI is a standalone incubator in Zanesville. Funded by a state grant called TechGROWTH Ohio, these hubs are part of a common entrepreneurial ecosystem working to get people into jobs in Southeast Ohio.

TechGROWTH is a partnership through which entrepreneurs and technology start-up companies in Southeast Ohio can access business assistance and sources of capital to aid with writing business plans, product development, legal services, marketing and executive recruitment. The program helps companies prepare to access seed-stage and angel investment capital, as well as research grants and loans.

TechGROWTH has assisted hundreds of technology companies with a range of services, grants and investments. These resources have helped area companies generate tens of millions of dollars in additional economic activity. TGO targets seed-stage technology companies in sectors such as advanced energy, biomedical, information technology, advanced materials and electronics. Under LIGHTS, that innovation network will be strengthened by bringing together multiple centers for innovation in Zanesville and Athens with those in Marietta and at Shawnee State.



ABOVE | President Lyndon Johnson greets Richland Avenue crowds, May 7, 1964. (Photo courtesy of Ohio University Archives Digital Collections)

At Zane State in Muskingum County, the IDEA lab is a high-tech workshop with precision cutting machine (called a CNC), 3-D printer, carpentry facilities and CAD-based tools, all for entrepreneurs and innovators to use for their product ideas and commercialization. Because of the LIGHTS grant, the MCBI can be adjacent to the IDEA lab and the inventors working on prototypes for product ideas. The MCBI will help those inventors commercialize their product. Zane State will provide space, marketing and accounting support, in order to facilitate a synergistic partnership between the IDEA lab and the Business Incubator.

"We're excited about moving beyond office space and providing a space where anyone with a product idea has a place to get help commercializing it," Triplett says. "I'm pretty optimistic about the future of the region."

UPGRADE AMBITIONS

BY SAMANTHA NELSON

Upgrade Athens County is a nonprofit organization and an energy efficiency movement competing for the Georgetown University Energy Prize competition. This two-year-long competition, which ends Dec. 31, 2016, brings communities together from across the United States to increase energy efficiency, and the community that reduces the most energy consumption will win \$5 million.

Upgrade Athens County's mission is to engage Appalachian citizens and spread energy efficiency awareness and improve the region's long-term economic and environmental sustainability. The organization, which will continue to exist after the competition ends, has expanded its project reach in the hopes of reducing energy consumption and increasing energy efficiency statewide.

PROJECTS

- Solar energy workshops and tours of homes and businesses that use solar energy.
- Ohio University Credit Union collaboration to finance consumers purchasing a zero-emission electric vehicle.
- The Energy Education Fund, which provides financial support to organizations that either want to start or improve their energy efficient educational programs for K-12 students.
- The Better Buildings Initiative, which encourages commercial, public, industrial and residential buildings to be 20 percent more energy efficient over the next decade and greatly reduce spending costs on energy.
- Small businesses and agricultural producers in Athens, Gallia, Hocking, Meigs, Morgan, Perry, Vinton and Washington counties can get free renewable energy site assessments through the United States Department of Agriculture's Renewable Energy for America Program (REAP) Energy Audit and Renewable Energy Development Assistance Program (EA/REDA).
- The Rental Efficiency Initiative, which provides information to renters and landlords on how to improve energy efficiency in rental properties through the Smart Renter email campaign, LED light bulb distribution and a landlord engagement campaign.



PHOTO | Sparks fly as Rob Miller hits a 2,100-degree piece of metal with a hammer.

ART HAPPENS

The rolling hills, quiet backroads and sleepy towns of Southeast Ohio remain a mainstay for both traditional and modern artistry. From updated takes on blacksmithing and quilting to offering painting, pottery and stained glass classes, these featured artists and their work evolve and shape to fit their community's needs.

PHOTO BY ROBERT MCGRAW





LEFT | Jeana Paglialunga and her mother, Joyce, hold up a quilt that was made in their shop.

BOTTOM | Scraps of past projects pile among rolls of ribbon and thread.

FINDING NEW THREADS

Mother-daughter duo transforms their St. Clairsville quilt shop with the times

STORY AND PHOTOS BY TAYLOR MAPLE

Among rolls of striped and dotted ribbon, seemingly every fabric under the sun, and strips and scraps of completed projects, there sits a mother and daughter team that has created something special in the heart of St. Clairsville.

That something special is From Past to Present, a quilt shop run by Jeana Paglialunga and her mother, Joyce. Jeana opened the shop after graduating Ohio University with a degree in fine art photography. She and Joyce have helped the shop's purpose evolve and grow ever since. As the name suggests, customers were initially able to bring old photographs, VHS tapes and eight millimeter films to Jeana, who would then digitally restore them and transfer the video to DVDs.

"When I was doing my senior thesis, I felt that photographs should be more than just something hanging on a wall," she says. "So I did photo quilts."

Jeana would scan photos from friends, family and customers, and print them directly onto fabric to create the quilts. It only made sense to monetize it. Jeana had come home from college and paid a few visits to the local quilt guild in Wheeling, West Virginia, doing talks about photo quilts. After that, she pursued job prospects in related fields, but nothing was willing to pay what she needed — especially now that she was pursuing her master's degree in art history.

And so, with these photo quilts as its first selling point, From Past to Present was born. Now, Jeana has partially transformed the purpose of the shop, in part due to customers finding the means to create photo quilts themselves.

"You can buy the printer fabric anywhere," Jeana says.

Photos and DVD conversions were a similar story.

"Places like Wal-Mart started offering it for a lot cheaper than I could do," she says. "I spent four or five hours on it, and they did it in 20 minutes."

The shop has changed, but it certainly hasn't slowed down. Jeana refocused primarily on quilting after customers begged her to start selling fabric. Since making this transition, Jeana and Joyce have expanded the shop from one room above a neighboring diner to three full rooms of fabric and a welcoming display of crafts by a front door right on the street.

They're constantly stocking up on new fabrics and

keeping up on trends. A stroll through the fabric rooms gives one a glimpse of endless opportunity — seasonal fabrics, every color imaginable, even some fabrics themed after characters of the hit PBS series *Downton Abbey*.

The shop hasn't only allowed Jeana and Joyce to express themselves artistically — it's also helped Joyce heal. In 2012, she was involved in an automobile accident, sustaining a head injury that shook her mentally. When recovery wasn't going as quickly as expected, doctors suggested she work in the quilt shop to exercise her brain.

"I used to be really good at math," Joyce says. "[Jeana] asked me a question one day and I couldn't answer it. So they suggested if I could work more in her shop, then it might bring some of my brain back."

Today, Joyce assists in the shop on a regular basis. She says working with the patterns and measurements has helped stimulate her brain. "I'm still not at 100 percent, but it's helped," she says.

The family connection and this shop is even more potent, as Jeana's grandfather owned a shoe store in the very same spot during the 1980s. Jeana has even pulled off old wall coverings in the bathroom to reveal a quirky wallpaper she remembered from her childhood.

Whatever is next for this shop, Jeana and Joyce have shown they can roll with the punches. For now, quilting and fabric are their focus. "She's very creative and she can pick out patterns better than anyone," Joyce says of her daughter. "I've learned a lot."

FROM PAST TO PRESENT (740) 526-9371
139 W Main St, St. Clairsville
www.frompasttopresent.com



PHOTO | Rob Miller heats a piece of metal in the forge's fire to 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit.



OLD-SCHOOL COOL

Blacksmith artisan brings the heat back to McConnelsville

STORY SAMANTHA NELSON | PHOTO BY ROBERT MCGRAW

Artisan Rob Miller's primary craft is building 18th, 19th and some 17th century guns. Oh, and he also tinsmithed several lanterns for the blockbuster movie *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides* and for the Fox television series *Sleepy Hollow*.

Suffice to say, Miller is a fan of history, particularly of the colonial-era, which influences his preferred style of gun building and other craftsman creations. For him, it's all about the historical connection. "The world is what you make of it and that's kind of what I'm doing," he says.

Miller says blacksmithing and building guns goes hand-in-hand, as parts of the guns he crafts — such as the lock mechanisms and the barrel— require blacksmithing.

The art of blacksmithing was once common in the towns of Southeast Ohio in the late 18th, 19th and early 20th centuries. The sound of the clanking metals as they were struck with hammers could be heard on just about any given day.

An authentic replica of a 19th century blacksmith shop is in McConnelsville in Morgan County, located behind the Evelyn True Button House.

In the center of the shop is a black forge with a cranking handle and a tube connected to the forge from underneath it. Tools line the walls and an anvil sits on a tree stump to the right of the forge. A small, portable forge and a brick forge that twists out of the roof like a crooked chimney are on the forge's left.

The forge has a hearth where the metal is placed into the fire. Blacksmiths can use a variety of different metals like steel, aluminum, iron ore — when it was easily accessible — brass and copper, just to name a few. A blacksmith requires a forge to heat the metal to a malleable state of about 1,400 degrees Fahrenheit. At that temperature, the metal will "go right through you," Miller says.

Beginning in July, Miller and Randy Baldwin, also a local resident, started providing blacksmithing demonstrations on the first Friday of every month. During this time, Miller began teaching Baldwin some of his acquired skills.

Baldwin says the demonstrations and other community initiatives, such as the Morgan County Historical Society and the Morgan County Community of the Arts, are part of an effort to draw people into town and become involved in the local activities, such as watching the duo's blacksmith work.

Every blacksmith has their own style and preferred blacksmithing techniques, and Miller says he has his own distinct style as well. "It's called rough," he says, laughing.

Baldwin, who took blacksmithing up as a hobby and is now setting up a blacksmith shop in his barn at home, cites a widening interest in the revitalization of blacksmithing. "There are more backyard blacksmiths out there than we probably realize," Baldwin says.

The shop wasn't always in its current location, which runs along an alleyway parallel to East Main Street. The materials that make up the small building were part of an old building that sat on the ground of the Ohio Coal Company. Much of the equipment was originally from a blacksmith shop that was once operated and owned by William S. McDaniel earlier in the 20th century in Malta, a town located just across the Muskingum River from McConnelsville. Today, the blacksmith shop replica is referred to as McDaniel's.

Whether it's for the historical presentation or an interest in picking up a new hobby, the blacksmith shop provides locals and visitors a picture of our past.

EVELYN TRUE BUTTON HOUSE
142 East Main Street, McConnelsville
www.historicalmorgancounty.com



FAR LEFT | Paintings from Two Broke Artists Art Studio student session line the space's walls as inspiration for others.

LEFT | A student paints "Whimsical Harvest" at a Tuesday evening session.

CRAFTED CULTURE

Lancaster's Two Broke Artists is rich in creative possibilities

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MACKENZIE TUCKY

Bobbi Roberts McKinnon, owner of Two Broke Artists Art Studio in Lancaster, offers sage insight when it comes to art creation. "In the art world there's always something changing, there's always something cool and new," she says. But for McKinnon, such movement can also be considered liberating.

From a young age, McKinnon aspired to become an artist who could teach others the joys of art as self-expression. Today, as a full-time art teacher at Fairfield Christian Academy and owner of Two Broke Artists Art Studio in downtown Lancaster, she lives her dream.

Since its opening in March 2014, Two Broke Artists Art Studio has offered classes to those interested in learning how to paint a masterpiece on a canvas, or sculpt ornate pottery in a few short hours.

"I just started this as a part-time thing three years ago and it turned into way more," McKinnon says. Last year, Two Broke Artists Art Studio won Lancaster's Downtown Business Award for "Business of the Year."

As you enter the grey and white studio, you are greeted by one of the artists at the studio's reception desk. The studio is filled with various canvas paintings that are the space's dynamic collection. There are beach scenes depicted, an owl sitting on a snow-covered tree branch with a scarf hanging around its neck, and other pieces that coincide with the seasons. The canvases are paintings from previous sessions put on display for those to see while walking over to the area for group painting sessions.

McKinnon says customers who walk into the studio believing he or she is utterly inartistic has the opportunity to walk out feeling like the next Leonardo da Vinci.

To encourage such confidence, McKinnon creates an informal atmosphere during studio sessions. For example, she invites participants to bring in their favorite food or drink while enjoying their painting or wheel throwing session.

"We do a lot of different things here. One woman wanted to do furniture paintings so we had a furniture

painting session, and boy, some of those turned out amazing," McKinnon says.

Another session last summer welcomed a renowned oil painter for an intense oil painting session. The course focused on specific oil painting techniques for those who are more advanced artists and visit the studio. "We had over 6,000 painters last year, so it was a pretty rockin' year," McKinnon says.

Other local art teachers, current and retired, teach with McKinnon at the studio, each bringing specific talents to lend to the program.

During a wheel throwing session, individuals are instructed on how to create masterful pottery. Local art teacher Jennifer Appelfeller teaches classes every Tuesday at the studio. Dale Hague, acting director of "Clay Center of Ohio," and professional potter for over 20 years, also occasionally teaches classes.

Two Broke Artists Art Studio offers youth classes for \$15 every Saturday morning. The teachers at the studio aim to foster creativity for children through art as this is their profession and passion. "Because I'm an art teacher, I love the youth classes here. They're so fun and it's good for them to get those creative thinking skills going," McKinnon says.

The studio also offers group, couple, and family paint sessions where step-by-step instructions are given, and the pace is slow enough so that all painters can finish their masterpieces without feeling rushed. The painting sessions are perfect for those wishing to relieve everyday stress, or tap into their imagination. McKinnon and her colleagues are eager to teach those of all ages and experience levels who are willing to have fun and embrace their creative side at Two Broke Artists Art Studio.

TWO BROKE ARTISTS ART STUDIO

(740) 404-3569

112 East Main, Lancaster

www.twobrokeartists.com

LET THE LIGHT IN

One man's passion for stained glass creates an inviting space to learn the art

STORY BY PAIGE BENNETT
PHOTOS BY KELSEY BRUNNER

Bernie Evans sits at his wooden work table, where tools and sketches scatter across its surface. He points to a lump on his chest and says, "This is Max." "Max," short for Electronic Maximum, is the pacemaker implanted in Evans' chest in 2005 after a physical exam revealed a heart problem. Evans, who had worked for a Chillicothe paper mill for 28 years, waited more than two years to be cleared to return to his factory job. But it was during this respite that he found peace in a new hobby; creating works of stained glass.

After Evans was cleared to go back to the paper mill, he worked in the factory six more months and then quit. "I decided I wasn't going to spend my life in the paper mill, so I started Bernie & Max Stained Glass Studio," he says.

The art of stained glass is millennia old, believed to date back to the first century, according to the Stained Glass Association of America. But in recent decades, Evans says the art has lost its popularity, until now.

"I thought, 'You know, with there not being anything around Chillicothe as far as stained glass goes, people would be interested in trying to pursue the arts,'" Evans says. "They were very receptive."

A room with wooden tables covered in glass bits and pieces welcomes students new and old. One student, Pam Hatton, now works for Evans at the studio.

"I took all of the classes: the beginner's class, the intermediate, the fused glass, and once I took them all, I kept coming to the studio," Hatton says. "I came every day. I never left. Now I work here and I teach the fused glass class, where students can make coasters and sun catchers."

Bernie & Max Stained Glass creates a space where community members can learn and safely create their own masterpieces. "I enjoy passing on the information to people, so they don't have to learn by trial and error like I did," Evans says. "There was a lot of glass-breaking and a lot of projects that didn't turn out the way I wanted them to."

Evans' passion for the art shines as he holds a sheet of deep blue and bright red marbled glass to the light. "People just see the colors, but stained glass is really alive. You can see it one way, and then with light behind it, it changes. That's what I love about glass. The colors, textures—it's amazing. It changed how I see everything."



ABOVE | Bernie Evans describes to students the intricate process of soldering grooved lead strips between each piece of cut glass.

BELOW | Evans watches student Susan Iversen to see if she needs assistance with glass cutting.



Evans' enthusiasm for the art permeates his interactions with students and customers. "Bernie is a great teacher," Kim Ervin, a customer from Parkersburg, West Virginia area, says. "He took us downstairs and showed us where he worked and what he was working on at the time. He's a wealth of information."

However Evans credits another individual with making the studio a special solace. He points to the corner of the room where his mother worked. Today, a glass piece in the shape of a piano keyboard with glass musical notes dangling from the keys hangs over her former workspace.

"She was an integral part from the very beginning of Bernie & Max," Evans says. "She passed away a year ago. She worked every day at 85 years old."

He points again, this time to the rows of vibrant trinkets and knick-knacks in the shop. "She probably made 50 to 60 percent of the stuff in the shop," he says. "I can't talk about the studio without mentioning Mom."

The glass on display for customers twinkles in every imaginable color. A sketch lies on the wooden work table, creating a complex design of what will soon be a stained glass masterpiece, made with Evans' own hands and heart.


BERNIE & MAX STAINED GLASS STUDIO

(740) 775-1054

65 N Paint St, Chillicothe

www.bernieandmaxstainedglass.com

TALES FROM THE FARM



Three local farms celebrate centennial and bicentennial birthdays this year, and each offers its own rich history

STORY BY CHEYENNE BUCKINGHAM
PHOTOS BY JORGE CASTILLO

Traveling to a farm may not seem like the most novel experience for a lifelong resident of Southeast Ohio where agriculture is part of the regional tapestry. Even the most jaded Ohio local has moments when merging off the smooth surface of U.S. Highway 33 and trekking up a winding, gravel stone path amid a forest of greenery — it's hard not to become mesmerized by nature's innate beauty. While the scenery is indeed breathtaking, the true beauty often lies at the destination. This year, three farms in our region celebrate their centennial and bicentennial birthdays. These homesteads have weathered times by virtue of their sustainable foundations: the families who have diligently passed it down from generation to generation.

SATER FARMS

A sign that reads, "Sater Farms ever since 1916" greets those who journey the half mile incline driveway through an abyss of trees.

"We brought the troops in today, I hope that's okay," says Joanne Sater, wife of owner, Paul Sater.

"The troops" refer to the their daughter Gretchen, their son Bruce and his wife, Stacy, and their three grandchildren, Zoey, Chloe and Sophie, who are all dressed in matching shirts with the farm's name stamped on the back. Paul inherited the farms and the acres of land in Rockbridge from his father in 1983.

"This was originally about 700 acres, going up the valley. Of course my father split up [the two farms] with my uncle and then he sold it and it's been passed down

to several different people and hopefully it'll stay in the family," Paul says.

Today, the two farms aggregate roughly 330 acres and if current arrangements are any indication, the farms longevity depends only on family harmony. Chloe, the second eldest grandchild, has already declared ownership of the farm. She and her two sisters live with their mother and father on Panther Road, which is located smack dab in the middle of the two farms. Joanne says the girls are actively engaged in helping their dad and grandfather with tasks around the farm.

"The girls like to come up and help during the hay season," Joanne says. "This year they rolled bales."

Paul's influence on his grandkids resembles that of which his father had on him while growing up, although, Paul says he didn't know right away that he would one day aspire to take ownership of the farm — unlike Chloe who has taken dibs exactly one generation in advance. Paul grew up on the farm with two sisters and a brother, and while his brother stayed for years, he decided to move away to work in Chicago.

"Sometime after that I moved back and decided [that] this is where I'm going to stay and I have been here since. I told Joanne, 'Don't try and get me to move, this is where I'm going to be,'" Paul says.

Paul graduated from Ohio State University with a degree in dairy technology, which entails the processing of milk and dairy products. During college he worked at the campus dairy, distributing milk, cottage cheese and ice cream to the dorms and commons on campus. But he

cites his mother as inspiring interest in this. “When I was growing up we used to milk. But my mother, she would milk two to my one,” Paul says.

He recalls his parents removing the cream from the milk and selling it to local grocery stores, then feeding what was left — the skim milk — to the pigs. They would also sell eggs from their chickens to the grocery and get a full week’s worth of food in return.

Today, the farm does not produce dairy, and there aren’t any chickens roaming free. Rather, the farm breeds up to 50 cattle per year, and the crops they grow — corn and hay — are solely used for their feed. “Everything that our cattle eat comes off our farm,” Bruce says.

And these cattle eat quite a bit, given that they must reach 500 lbs. to be sold off to market in Zanesville. More specifically, about 15 cattle consume one bale of hay and nearly four, 5-gallon buckets of ears of corn per day. They eat this main course first thing in the morning and spend the rest of the day grazing amongst the couple hundred acres. Needless to say, Paul is kept busy cultivating corn and hay, day in and day out.

DETWILER FARM

Mary Ellen Wood, owner of Detwiler Farm, on the other hand, no longer worries about feeding animals or harvesting any crops anymore; she leases her 79 acres out to other farmers. Her husband, Donald Wood, still mows the land and offers to help the farmers when needed, just like he used to do when Mary Ellen’s father still operated the property. This year the farmers who lease the land are growing corn, and next year it will cultivate soybeans. This rotation of crops each year enables the soil’s fertility to be maintained, which is especially crucial given its 200-plus years of use. Mary Ellen says the family’s land

was vibrant in both crop diversity and animals during her grandparents’ era. It was not until her parents took over in the 50s that corn and soybeans became the main attraction.

“They milked cows, they had sheep, hogs and chickens,” Mary Ellen says. “My mom and dad are the ones who broke that, but they did have a dairy farm for a while.”

The farm’s roots date to 1816, when Jacob Henderlich came to town from Baltimore, Maryland and bought 80 acres of land. It was his daughter who married John Detwiler and gave the farm its name. Detwiler’s son, Monroe Edward, was Mary Ellen’s father, which makes her the first woman in the long line of relatives to claim ownership of the farm. While the previous women were not listed on the deed, their work was equally integral.

“All of the grandmothers around farms worked right along with the husband. My grandmother would go around to the cornfield and [she’d] even plant pole beans in the cornfield and let them grow in the corn. She cooked a big meal for all of the workers, she was a hardworking lady,” Mary Ellen says.

A rustic, old brick home with two front doors and six windows sits in the midst of the flat field. The screech of a hawk billows throughout the terrain. There are no hills. Just rows of corn coat the land behind the house. It was built in 1879, and while Mary Ellen never lived there, she recalls memories of visiting the people who had once taken residency there, her grandparents.

“We’d come up and stay overnight with our grandparents, and course there was nothing to do because they had no TV, and the radio didn’t come in very good clear out here. So newspaper and magazines was about it,” Mary Ellen says.



OPPOSITE PAGE | Detwiler Farm in Fairfield County.

THIS PAGE | Overhead shot of 330 acres in Hocking County.



ABOVE | Sater Farms' owner Paul and his wife Joanne, middle, pose with their two kids, grandchildren and daughter-in-law.

Inside, the floors are all carpeted and old bedrooms are lined with formerly elegant wallpaper featuring a pink rose and purple lilac print that now peels from the moisture seeping in from the roof. Mary Ellen maneuvers down the crooked wooden steps with ease, her feet slightly rotate to the right as she descends into a seemingly cooler environment.

She says this is where her grandmother used to store crops, meat and milk, when times changed and technology improved, “My grandfather bought her a refrigerator and she wouldn’t use it. She carried her milk down here like she’d done all her life,” says Mary Ellen.

She says her grandfather was the inverse, an innovative and prepared character. He was the person nearby farmers and neighbors would go to if they needed bolts and screws, because he had one of nearly every shape and size. A reminder of his meticulousness are the bins stacked on top of one another in both floors of the farm, each with its own faded labels and rusted drawer handles to embellish the antiquity of them. The farm’s downstairs houses a myriad of stables for sheep and cows. Mary Ellen points to a particularly large stall to the left of the entrance and then points to an adjacent dial that regulates the concrete heat so that mother pigs could birth their babes in comfort.

“They woke up at 4 a.m., worked hard all day and the minute it turned dark, they blew the oil lamp out. They didn’t have much of a night life,” Mary Ellen says with a small laugh.

And while the barn that stands today isn’t the one that stood there 200 years ago, it’s not because of shoddy capacity. Rather, the original foundation caught fire and burned down the summer of 1927, and two months

later, Jacob Detwiler’s friends came to their rescue with a monumental Barn Raising event. Mary Ellen still keeps a small newspaper clipping of the event. Remarkably, the excerpt ends with the following sentence, “Mrs. Detwiler furnished the men with a sumptuous dinner.” The women were integral parts, indeed.

MORGAN RAID FARM

Sharing a bicentennial birthday is Morgan Raid Farm in Morgan County, about 60 miles to the east of Detwiler Farm. The farm was established via a land grant by James Madison, back in June of 1816 that was signed over to James Whittacre, who is a distant relative of the current owner, Richard McElhiney. It was originally called the Fox and Hound Tavern, but that changed in 1863 after Morgan and his 500 men came through and raided the vicinity on his way to the North.

Richard and his wife, Bonnie McElhiney, acquired the land in 1987, but Richard recalls the farm’s history by virtue of his two great aunts. Neither of the sisters had ever married and they owned the farm up until the 1950s, and that’s when they deeded it to Richard’s father, who was then 70 years old. Richard recounts the time when his great aunts ran the property, they grew corn, hay and raised cattle. But after its production began to fizzle after the transfer, it evolved from a functioning farm to a historical hotspot.

Richard cites his great, great aunt, Rachel, as a significant figure in the farm’s history, because she lived through the namesake event. “Rachel was 16 years old and lived in the farmhouse when Morgan and his men went through the house [on] July 23, 1863,” Richard says.

Evidence of this history is provided by Bonnie, who



ABOVE | Detwiler Farm house in Fairfield County.

RIGHT | Bales of hay at the Sater Farm in Hocking County.

BOTTOM RIGHT | Paul Sater rests next to his tractor in his centennial farm located in Hocking County.

reads from a 1977 article that appeared in Morgan High School's newspaper: the residents of Morgan County had been informed that General Morgan and his soldiers were coming through and saying, "We're killing everybody and we're burning all of the homes." Morgan and his troops crossed the Muskingum River, so Richard's ancestors fled to the woods with their horses, knowing the men would be tempted to steal them. The men raided the farm, taking all of the clean clothing and leaving their soiled clothes behind, bread and freshly churned buttermilk, which is far less detrimental than the threats that were supposed to ensue. They didn't even so much as break a single glass in the home; however, one of the walls was peppered with bullets for reasons that are unresolved. Today, members of the Civil War Preservation of Ohio come in for events with metal detectors and try to find out where one of the soldiers who had fallen during the raid is buried, as well as, any other remnants that may be salvageable.

Three Southeast Ohio farms, each containing its own personality and eclectic mix of people and history celebrate a milestone of existence. And each farm, just like an old tree that sheds bark and leaves season after season, has its established roots. A farm's history endures by the people who have devoted their lives to keeping a family legacy alive. It's through these exceptional people that we learn the history of those who manifested care and perseverance to create a historic legend in Ohio.







CIVIL SOCIETY

Reenactors travel from afar to relive key events in American history

STORY BY EMILY BOHATCH
PHOTOS BY ROBERT MCGRAW

PHOTO | Men of the 45th Ohio Infantry fire at Confederate cavalry across the historical battle site.

Samuel Walgren quietly holds his breath as the P. A. Denny glides through the steady waters of the Ohio River, closer and closer to what, for some, could mean the end.

On this dreary Sunday morning, the sky is a pale shade of gray against the green background of the lazy river and foliage. The early hours are peaceful, filled with jokes between old friends, a game of chuck-a-luck and the occasional swig of rum occupying the monotony between turns as watchmen for the 45th Ohio infantry.

Inch by inch, the atmosphere on the P. A. Denny changes as men in gray wool uniforms and belts prominently stamped "CS" begin to appear through the yellowing, early-fall forest. On the ship, their blue-coated counterparts lined the port side, ripping open brown paper packages of dark powder and pouring it down the barrels of their guns. Fellow infantryman Brian Williams joins Walgren at the front of the ship. The two had traveled about six hours in anticipation of this exact moment.

The command breaks through the still of the quiet morning: "Fire when you have a shot."

Walgren and Williams rest their guns on their damp shoulders and gaze down the lengthy barrels, waiting until Confederate soldiers drifted into range. Fire at will, sounds across the deck of the P. A. Denny. The Union navy and infantrymen and Brigadier General John Hunt Morgan's Confederate forces exchange gunfire across the Ohio River. The thunder of cannon fire billowed out from the woods. Walgren instinctively ducks and takes cover, then

stands up grinning.

"Well, I'm dead," Williams says, letting out an adrenaline-filled chuckle. "We're dead."

If it had been 153 years earlier, a different time on a different ship, Williams and Walgren might very well be dead. But on this morning, the reenactors of the Battle of Buffington Island were merely "blowing off some powder."

The men of the 45th Ohio were just a handful of the about 250 participants who traveled to Meigs County for the Morgan's Raid Reenactment, says Constance White, a Morgan's Raid Reenactment Committee member and Vinton County resident. In total, the mid-September event attracted about 100 cavalry men and their horses, two mounted artillery groups and about 150 infantrymen from across the United States, White says.

The highly orchestrated event, which took about two years to plan, was the first reenactment of the iconic Confederate movement across Ohio since 2006. "It took us that long to decide we wanted to do it again because it is such a major, major undertaking," White says.

However, the reenactments were a testimony to the only Civil War battle in Ohio, and it provided an opportunity to relive the area's history.

THE RIVER'S ROLE

In July of 1863, Morgan and his troops traversed 24 counties in Ohio in just 13 days in an effort to draw Union troops farther north to relieve pressure on the south. Though Morgan's troops only passed through most



ABOVE | Chris Raizer from Hartford, W.Va., works on the tent that he slept in before the big river battle reenactment.

TOP RIGHT | Musicians play as reenactors and guests dance the way they did during the Civil War.

BOTTOM RIGHT | Herschel Tatlock, left, talks with fellow reenactor Ryan Williams, middle, as Vanessa Williams gets the tent ready to sleep in the night before the big river battle.



PHOTO | Civil War reenactors from all over the United States pose on the P.A. Denny before The Battle of Buffington Island, which started on the Ohio River.



southern Ohio counties, the men spent nearly three days in Meigs County, says David Mowery, the chair of the Buffington Island Battlefield Preservation Foundation and author of two books on the raid.

As Morgan traveled through Chester and Portland, he clashed with Union forces and eventually was surrounded and captured while trying to cross the Ohio River at the Battle of Buffington Island, Mowery says. “The Battle of Buffington Island in Portland, Ohio, is the largest Civil War battle fought in that part of the United States,” Mowery says.

In fact, an integral key to Morgan’s demise was one of the largest draws to the event: the use of gunboats.

When Pennsylvania resident Kurt Lafy got wind of an opportunity to hit the open water on one of three Civil War era paddleboats, he gladly undertook the eight hour drive to Portland.

“In several years of reenacting, this is the first time it’s

been offered up, so I says, ‘I can’t miss it,’” Lafy says. “This is a one-of-a-kind reenactment. That was my motivation.”

Lafy has traveled throughout the country during the last 20 years reliving history as a Civil War reenactor. For him, the experience is quite personal.

A PASSION FOR YOUR PAST

“About 25 years ago, I figured out my ancestor was in the 141st Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. And online in a Civil War chatroom I was asking questions, and this guy said, ‘Hey, I had an ancestor in the 141st,’” Lafy recounted, readjusting his dark gray cap affixed with the numbers 141. “It turns out that our [ancestors] fought together, so he sent me a Civil War hat — one of these — and I was kind of hooked.”

Lafy then visited a Civil War Sutler, a store that specializes in era memorabilia and uniforms, and completed his set.



TOP LEFT | Seth Plum, right, David McCartney, middle, and Darryl Warchol, left, get ready at 6 a.m. before the battle on the Ohio River begins.

BOTTOM LEFT | Justin Ashbaugh plays a game of Chuck-a-luck before the Ohio River Battle.

BOTTOM RIGHT | James Burnette blows his whistle to signal that the enemy has been spotted on shore and for everyone to get into position.

From there, Lafy devoted hours to research, writing two books of his own on his ancestor's comrades, and collecting biographies on all 1,000 men of the Pennsylvania 141st.

Lafy says his passion for the war is a shared one. In his years as a reenactor, the men running over hills with old rifles have become a family. "If you're into sewing and you join the sewing club, everyone there is of like mind," Lafy says. "Well, when you're a Civil War reenactor, everyone is of a similar mind, so you're already in agreement of scads of issues and you love history."

Sam Grant stands at the foot of the the Old Meigs County Courthouse in Chester, Ohio's oldest surviving courthouse. His well-tailored jacket is an exact recreation — Grant can show you photographic proof — of the jacket of a general and future president who shares his last name: Ulysses S. Grant. A real Civil War staff officer sword hangs from his hip, a dressed-down version of one of General Grant's presentation swords. Though Grant can't remember where or how he obtained the sword, he's worn it during many of his 25 years of reenacting.

LIVING IN THESE MOMENTS

Though Grant, who traveled 12 hours from his

Massachusetts base, spends copious time consuming primary documents, books and photos on the Civil War, he maintains that's no way to actually learn history.

"Reading books is fun. You learn a lot, but you can't learn what it feels if I tell you the wagons were in up to their axles in mud. That men were walking in mud up to their ankles ... You can't feel the mud of that field unless you've at least experienced [it]," Grant says. "If you want to understand what Morgan was facing and why decisions were made, you've got to feel it."

That comprehension comes from in-the-moment decisions on the reenactment field. Before starting a battle, men are only given a basic outline. The rest is up to their previous research and improvisation.

"We don't know what we're doing. Did they rehearse?" Grant says. "We know where they're coming from. We know they have to burn that bridge. We know if we set up a moderate defense, we'll slow them. We don't have to lick 'em. We just have to slow them down." For many reenactors, such interactions are what brings the reenactment to life.

As men in their unit wearily struggled off of a bus after the Battle of Buffington Island, Lafy and Pete Gilbert, a reenactor from New York, rehash parts of the battle and





TOP PHOTO | Samuel Walgren takes aim on the second deck of the P. A. Denny as Confederate soldiers fire from the brush on the bank of the Ohio River.

PHOTO INSET TOP | Union soldiers keep watch for Confederate militia on the shores of the Ohio River.

PHOTO INSET BOTTOM | Union and Confederate soldiers both get ready to fire on one another.

BOTTOM PHOTO | Confederate soldiers shoot cannons from the shores of the Ohio River at the Union soldiers on boats.



ABOVE | Soldiers continue the Battle of Buffington on the main land.



ABOVE | A member of the Ohio 45th lays down after taking a hit.



ABOVE | The playing of the bugle and sullen soldiers signifies the defeat of the Confederate Army.

the split second decisions that won the skirmish for them. “We knew infantry fighting cavalry, it was going to be a tough fight,” Gilbert says. “Yesterday, that was an exhausting, tough fight.”

“But we bopped them today,” Lafy says with a chuckle.

Gilbert explains that to fight cavalry on foot, the men decided to take cover in a patch of underbrush in the middle of the battlefield. From there, they fired at passing riders, taking them by surprise. “It’s your only tactic with the cavalry,” Gilbert says with a confidence that comes with his 28 years of reenactments.

And for Gilbert and Lafy, who have been side-by-side reenactment comrades for nearly 10 years, tactics are the name of the game. “You’re reliving history,” Gilbert says. “You do that, but you’re also learning while the reenactment is going on. You’re learning tactics. You’re learning how things were done.”

“We didn’t come here to get shot and lay down,” Lafy adds adamantly.

That education is present on and off the battlefield. For Justin Ashbaugh, who stands amid rows of canvas tents and sleeping mats, the draw of reenactment is often in the details.

The Kentucky resident spent the previous three days sleeping on the cold, hard ground under nothing but a canvas sail. He could likely carry on his back all of the belongings he brought for the week, and that’s just the way he likes it. “You can utilize a lot of this stuff not just here, but in real life. A lot of people don’t know how to sew. I know how to sew,” Ashbaugh says, picking at his homemade shirt.

Unlike many of his comrades, Ashbaugh doesn’t spend his spare time actually studying Civil War history, although he can list in detail the weapons used in the war and whip up from scratch some solid 19th century recipes. But he maintains that everything he knows he learned from six years of reenacting. Now, he feels so comfortable talking about the era he speaks at schools in his area, in uniform, of course.

“It’s to the point when you get doing this that you can watch a movie and go, ‘Oh, that guy’s not wearing the right stuff!’” Ashbaugh laughs. Having grown up in the south, Ashbaugh says Civil War history offers interesting contradictions, depending on where you hear it and who tells it. Many people believe it was a war about slavery, he says, but he believes that’s only part of the story. “That’s what I think truly gets people out. They want to know the truth about why the war was fought,” he says.

And for the men and women who drive 18, 16 or 12 hours for a few moments of glory amid the gun powdered air, discovery and experience is what it’s all about.

As the P. A. Denny makes its final pass in front of Buffington Island and the last of the powder clears, the men of the Ohio 45th grin ear to ear. Many of this group portraying navy men had never been on a ship before, and they feel their first go of it is a success.

Ashbaugh lowers his rifle and kicks the clutter of brown paper cartridges that accumulated at his feet under the railing. As he looks up, he can’t help but crack a smile as he reads the words written on the white banner strung between two trees on the shore.

“Welcome, Yankee Scum.”

TAKE THE MORGAN'S RAID DRIVING TOUR

BY SARAH WEINGARTEN

Southern Ohio is the only region in the state to host a major Civil War battle. In July 1863, General John Hunt Morgan and his Confederate army raided southern Ohio. Today you can drive along the path that the Confederate army took to their defeat. The total drive is around 550 miles, but you don't need to travel far to visit some of the venture's most notable spots.

ADAMS COUNTY

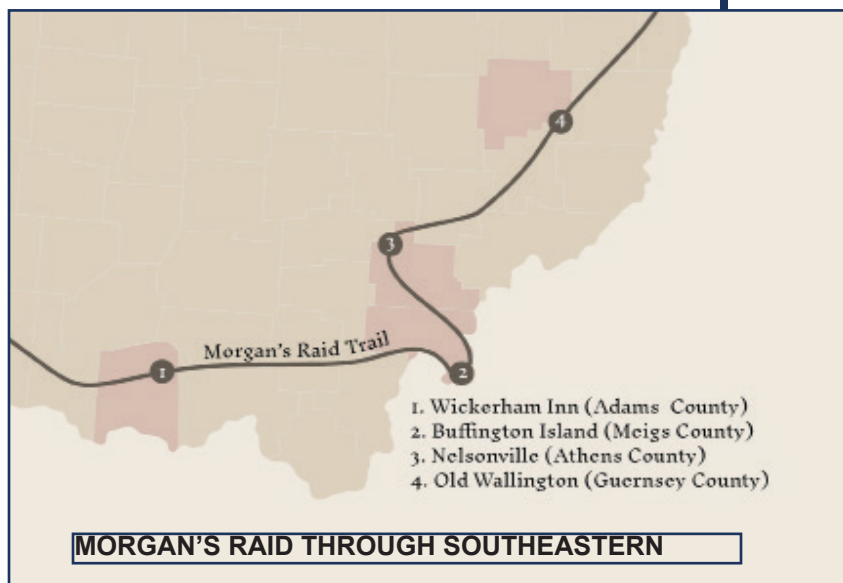
This is where Morgan and his men entered Southeast Ohio. They made their way to Locust Grove, then south to the Wickerham Inn where the soldiers slept overnight. It is one of the oldest brick buildings in Adams County and is believed to be haunted. Today Wickerham Inn is private property, but history buffs can still stop by to view the outside.

Nearby: Serpent Mound (<http://arcofappalachia.org/serpent-mound/>), the largest effigy mound in the world. Drive 20 minutes south to eat at Blake Pharmacy & Hallmark Cards (<http://www.adamscountytravel.org/foodunique.html>), an authentic '60s drugstore and soda fountain serving milkshakes and sandwiches.

GUERNSEY COUNTY

Morgan and his men traveled through Perry, Morgan, Muskingum Counties, then stopped in what is now Old Washington in Guernsey County. Morgan's army of 2,460 men was now less than 600 men. They did not ransack the town, but instead wanted shelter and food. The Union army arrived early the next morning and fired shots at the troops, forcing them to flee the state. Three Confederate soldiers were killed in Old Washington and are buried there.

Nearby: Check out the Southeastern Ohio Symphony Orchestra (<http://seoso.org/>) in Concord. If you are looking for something more adventurous, you can go on a Zipline Tour of The Wilds (<http://www.zipthewilds.com/home>) in Cumberland.



ATHENS COUNTY

After the Battle at Buffington, Morgan and what was left of his men fled through Vinton County and stopped in Nelsonville in Athens County. Nelsonville was empty of Union troops because Union soldiers thought Morgan would go to Athens, so Morgan took 36 horses and set a handful of canal boats and set canal bridges ablaze before leaving.

Nearby: Stuart's Opera House (<http://stuart-soperahouse.org/>) and take a look around Gallery 1879. You can also stop by the Fun Barn (<http://www.movies.ten.com/index.cfm?p=links&id=000D05>) to play arcade games and catch a movie.

MEIGS COUNTY

Although the Confederate troops traveled through Pike and Jackson Counties they stopped in Meigs County near Portland, where the Battle at Buffington Island occurred. It is the only major battle from the Civil War that took place in Ohio. The Union soldiers surrounded Morgan and his 1,700 men the night of July 18, 1863 and attacked the next morning. You can visit the Buffington memorial site — but fair warning — the site is actually three miles farther north on State Route 124 than what GPS lists. There is a burial mound for the soldiers who lost their lives, a monument about the battle and a few picnic tables.

Nearby: Snowville Creamery (<http://www.snowvillecreamery.com/>) is a staple of Southeast Ohio, or hit the trails of Forked Run State Park (<http://parks.ohiodnr.gov/forkedrun>).



A GROUNDED GENTLEMAN

Dorsell Bibbee helped dig his first grave when he was a teen. 60 years later, he's still rocking.

STORY BY CHRISTOPHER MILLER
PHOTOS BY ROBERT MCGRAW

Ordinarily, retirement is spent resting and relaxing not regularly shoveling dirt many times your own weight. Suffice to assume, Dorsell Bibbee, an 82-year-old Tupper Plains resident is extraordinary. Bibbee works as a gravedigger for White-Schwarzel Funeral Home in Coolville in Athens County, a job Bibbee has held for over 60 years. Here's a look into the life of Tupper Plains' denizen gravedigger.

TUPPERS SWEET TUPPERS

"I was born [in 1934] down the road here in Tupper Plains on Success Road. In 1971, me, Mom and Dad moved out the other way between Tupper Plains and Darwin at Alfred and 71st Street. After my parents died, I had a trailer at another fella's place, then I stayed at a friend's great aunt's til I come out here in May. I've stayed around Tupper Plains my whole life."

A HAND IN THE LAND

"In the 1950s and 60s we had an 83-acre farm with a half dozen cows for selling milk. My Dad and I farmed some, and I'd help with hay. When people needed help digging a water line or electric line, I'd do that too."

SPARE TIME NOTES

"I like to go listen to live music and go to the [County] Fair. I used to play the guitar, until I lost it when our trailer burnt down. But I never got into them ballgames or nothing."

SUPER (AND NATURAL) FORCES

"Sometimes it'd be really windy and a tent would blow over and certain graves would be tougher than others but nothing scary [ever happened], even though I used to dig at night with a lantern when we were running behind."

WORKPLACE HAZARDS

"People don't know it can be dangerous. One time, the young boy operating the tractor swung the bucket around, hit my arm and I fell into the hole. Had I hit the hard vault, it could have been much worse. Like anything else, you really have to be careful."

WHY HE STILL DIGS HIS WORK

"One reason is you are not in the same place every day. You get to work at other places, not like working in the same store every day. And, you get to meet lots of different people, families, and people from the different vault companies."



LEFT | Bibbee puts supplies in place before beginning to dig. Rather than work with the aid of machinery, Bibbee prefers to do all his work manually, even at the age of 82. The mark of a veteran gravedigger.



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*Cadence Crisp, 7, plays with glowsticks
outside Charlie's Red Star Blues Barn.
Story on page 4. Photo by Marlina Sloss*