

Southeast OHIO

Winter/Spring 2015

INSIDE:

Indulge in Velvet's history

**See inside a
mortuary museum**

Go on a
different kind of
vision quest

MYSTERY LOVES COMPANY

Zanesville Community Theatre takes
on Agatha Christie's *The Hollow*



Serpent Mound illumination

Skatopian society

Bobcat recovery

Letter from the Editor

In our small towns, the overwhelming sense of community is a source of pride. Our modest neighbors achieve great things by reaching out to their families, friends and even strangers to show that they care.

Phil Sager makes a drive from Maryland every week just to provide his loyal customers a taste of the sea at his restaurant, The Grand Restaurant and Tavern (16). Julie Chafin was touched by some disabled children at a cheerleading competition and saw the urgency for a special needs dance class. Her humility caused her to begin a new program offering free dance classes to children with special needs, changing their lives and giving them a chance no one else would (10).

Velvet Creamery, the family business that offers our region's most delicious scoop, is celebrating its 100-year anniversary (52), while Busy Bee Restaurant continues to revel in its mom-and-pop glory—the new owner shares memories of a childhood spent at the restaurant (17).

Although our region loves to celebrate the past, we also never stop moving and evolving, as outlined in our Local-Motion department. The tiny town of Gallipolis wanted to create a more beautiful environment in which to live, so a few city members took charge and launched a beautification process throughout the community (22).

Speaking of visuals, one of our writers accompanied Hocking Hills Investigation Team on a search for ghosts



and other mysterious happenings in our region (34).

The sense of community is fully encompassed in my trip to the Zanesville Community Theatre (24). The encouragement and friendliness erupting from the evening reminded me of just how vital community is—for most of those people, the theater gang is like an extended family.

Southeast Ohio is filled with expressive culture, delicious food and success stories. But most importantly, it is made up of the people who are happy to call it home.

Nadia Kurtz, Editor-in-Chief



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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.

ON THE COVER

Cary Underwood plays Midge Harvey in Zanesville Community Theatre's *The Hollow*. Photo by Royle Mast

ON THE BACK

Haunted Hocking Investigation Team participants gather in the Moonville Tunnel. Photo by Royle Mast

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The Great Serpent Mound lit
by hundreds of luminaries.

Winter's Glow

The Illumination at
Serpent Mound

By CHRIS SAULNIER Photos by CLARE GUCWA



Native Americans and their ancestors throughout the United States come together to celebrate the winter solstice each year. In Adams County, no American Indian lineage is required to join in the time-honored tradition of remembering the year's shortest day.

Friends of Serpent Mound, an organization under the Ohio Historical Society, has marked this special day since 2004 by illuminating an effigy mound for the community. Delsey Wilson, executive director of Friends of Serpent Mound, says the group formed ten years ago because of concerns about the condition of the park. After the organization's first successful year working with the Ohio Historical Society to improve conditions at the mound, Friends of Serpent Mound wanted to celebrate its progress. Wilson's husband had the idea to illuminate the mound.

During the first celebration of the solstice Friends of Serpent Mound used only 600 candles. Now, more than 1,000 candles illuminate the Great Serpent Mound. In a process that has stayed consistent since 2005, all of the candles used are lit from a sacred fire at 5 p.m. and burn for about three hours. Wilson's father makes the sacred fire with cedar wood in the traditional Native American way he learned years ago. He starts the fire three days before the first candle is lit and blesses his creation.

Tim Goodwin, park manager at the Great Serpent Mound, says the event is best “at dusk, where you see the lights slither over toward the edge of the cliff.” Wilson says the sight of the shimmering mound isn’t the only thing that makes the event distinct. “What’s really special about the lighting is the community and the diversity of the community that comes,” Wilson says of the event. She thinks the public is missing a sense of communal connection and that the lighting of the mound offers a meaningful group activity during the holiday season.

The nondenominational festival has a special place in Wilson’s heart. Having lost her daughter a couple of years ago, she fondly remembers the last solstice they shared together. “It was one of her favorite events,” Wilson says as she is barely able to hold back tears. “The memory of the last one she shared with me is always special.”

Wilson says that because every tradition is different, guests are welcome to celebrate as they please while they light their candles. Whether that is saying a prayer or a thank you, reflecting on the past, or thinking about the future, the winter solstice at Serpent Mound provides a venue to commemorate the day and to, as Wilson says, “enjoy a place and share that enjoyment with others.” 🇺🇸



Luminary bags placed along the edges of the 1,330-foot-long effigy mound located in Adams County.



Hundreds of people gathered to light the candles in the memory of a loved one, to bring positive energy, or simply in honor of the tradition of the winter solstice.

Did you know?

So you think you know everything about the “Heart of It All” state? Take a stroll through our list of sometimes-strange-but-true local facts. By AVERY T. JENNINGS

The Orchard House, built in the 1850s on 12 acres of land outside Granville, is not your typical bed and breakfast. In the 1950s it was the first licensed home to alcoholics in Ohio. Since reopening in 2010, the hotel has invited guests to enjoy its farm-like atmosphere. Several resident animals grace the property, including a slew of llamas and **alpacas**, a pot-bellied pig and two Nigerian Dwarf Goats.

The city of Jackson was originally named “**Salt Lick Town**” by settlers in 1795 because it contained the Scioto Salt Licks. Ohio passed legislation regulating salt mining at the licks March 23, 1803, less than one month after Ohio became a state, crystallizing salt mining’s status as Ohio’s first industry.

The ghost of Dr. Joseph Lowry is rumored to haunt the **Briggs Lawrence County Public Library**, which was built on the grounds where the physician’s house previously stood. Lowry died in 1933, and the local undertaker admitted to mistreating Lowry’s body out of revenge for an unpaid debt.

Fairfield County is the site of a string of events being held through 2015 to commemorate 150 years since the end of the Civil War. Three hundred thousand men from Ohio volunteered to serve in the Union army, the third-largest Union enrollment behind only New York and Pennsylvania. Nine soldiers from Fairfield County received the **Congressional Medal of Honor** for their contributions during the Civil War.



Pike County’s Eager Inn was the first stone inn built in Ohio in 1797. Located at the junction of Pike Lake Road and Morgan’s Fork Road, it housed guests until 1870. Prior to the Civil War, the inn was a stop for slaves traveling north on the Underground Railroad. It’s now one of eight properties on Pike County’s National Register of Historic Places.


Flight of the Hawk Park, located off Route 33 in Lancaster, welcomes visitors entering the Sugar Grove area with life-sized metal sculptures of deer and wild turkeys, some of Ohio’s native wildlife. The highlight of the six-acre park is a 2,500-pound sculpture of a red-tailed hawk perched in its nest 42 feet above the ground. Sugar Grove artist Ric Leichter designed all of the park’s sculptures. 

Photo provided by: Flight of the Hawk Park



Snowville's Scene and Herd

Dairyman's passion for purity steers business

By HALLIE RAWLINSON Photos by CLARE GUCWA

What if someone offered you a miracle elixir that makes you live longer, helps you avoid all major illnesses and assures your children will be healthier as well? Does that seem too good to be true? Well Warren Taylor, the owner of Snowville Creamery in Pomeroy, would disagree.

He says the answer is simple: milk.

"I like to say if you cut me, I bleed white. I just consume dairy products like crazy. I live on dairy products," Taylor says.

But the miracle formula is not just any milk. Taylor and the other employees at Snowville Creamery strive to produce dairy products that start with grass-fed cows, which are treated humanely and cared for in a way that promotes sustainability. Taylor will be the first to tell you that his milk is not the

kind found on your average grocery store shelf.

"They're different milks," Taylor says. "They're nutritionally very different, because these [cows] are eating grass. You know, garbage in, garbage out. If you lived on Twinkies and Snicker bars, you might grow big...real big, but how healthy would you be?"

James Winch, a five-year employee, started at the creamery as a tanker driver and now works as an HTST (High Temperature Short Time) employee in their testing lab. This means that Winch heats the milk to pasteurize it and rid it of any pathogenic bacteria. He was inspired to work for the creamery after admiring their products as well as their process. "I wanted to work here because I liked Snowville products," Winch says. "I really liked the company and what they were doing."

Taylor and his wife Victoria opened the creamery in 2006 and were producing their first milk by December 2007. But Taylor is not new to the dairy world. Like his father and his brother, he earned a Dairy Technician degree from Ohio State University, in 1974, and went on to move to California to run the largest peer consulting company in the world designing food processing plants and dairy plants.

Opening up a creamery had always been a dream for Taylor and his friends. “Whenever we got into the third bottle of Cabernet when we were having a good venison ham, we’d start saying ‘We’ve gotta build our own milk plant and bottle this milk by golly!’” Taylor says. “Someday.”

So when a paradigm shift of production within the dairy industry caused much of Taylor’s business to move to China, he had a decision to make. Taylor and his wife chose to chase his dream. Taylor

closed the consulting company and took Victoria and his two kids, “barely out of diapers,” back to Ohio in 1994.

Today, the 6,000-square-foot plant sits on a 350-acre farm in Pomeroy with 225 cows. As well as their own cows, the creamery uses a dozen other farms’ cows in order to produce dairy products for all of the major urban areas of Ohio. The cows are all non-GMO (genetically modified organism) fed and as healthy as possible for milk production.

Snowville’s commitment to the health of its cows, its customers and the environment makes it a leader in the sustainable food arena in Southeast Ohio.

But today, Taylor’s continued focus is the future, and particularly on the health of our children. “People say, ‘Why did I do this?’” Taylor says. “I say, ‘Because I was so mad, I was so angry at the lousy milk we give our children in this country.’”



Left: Owner Warren Taylor looks out over the land of his creamery on which 35 full-time employees work.

Bottom left: Snowville Creamery packages 24,000 cartons of milk per week, which are sent to 143 locations including Giant Eagle, Whole Foods and Kroger.

Bottom right: The creamery sits on a 350-acre piece of the 3,203 total combined acreage of all contributing farms.



A Chance to Dance

This class is moving in more ways than one

By BEZ SACIRI Photos by ROYLE MAST

Two years ago, Julie Chafin took her daughter, Ally, to a cheerleading competition at the Columbus Convention Center. When she walked into the gym, she couldn't believe what she saw: children with physical and mental disabilities participating in the competition.

"I started crying when I saw these kids in the gym," Chafin says. After the event, Chafin developed the desire to help out children with special needs in any way that she could. She has been a dance instructor for 15 years, so Chafin decided she wanted to teach a dance class.

Chafin had only one problem, which was finding a partner to help kick start the program. A few months passed before Heidi Rogols, co-owner and director of Charmion Performing Arts Center in Circleville, decided she wanted to help Chafin reach her goal.

Currently, Charmion only offers one class for children with special needs. The class is a creative

movement class that meets on Wednesdays for 45 minutes. It's a modified class in the sense that if the children can stand on their toes to do the activity, they'll do it. Some of the participants are in wheelchairs, so they raise their hands instead of using their toes.

“A year ago, they wouldn't talk. Now, they are so happy to be in the same class with other girls.”

-Tabitha Warren
Grandparent

In the first full year of the class, nine children enrolled. This year, three additional children signed up for the class. The class is free, including the ballet slippers and costume for the recital, which is planned for the first weekend in June. Rogols and her husband, Marc, pay for the shoes and costumes for the class.



Eli Layne runs under a parachute during dance practice.

“We’ve received so much gratitude from the parents because we’ve made this class and everything else free,” Rogols says.

Chafin says her teaching style has not changed even though she is working with children who require special attention. Her main goal is still for the students to learn and have fun.

Circleville resident Tabitha Warren and her two granddaughters have already benefited from the program. Both Alexis, 8, and Josie, 5, have not been able to make friends as easily as other children who are the same age as they are.

“In school, no one wants to play with them because they have special needs,” Warren says.

But this dance class has helped both of the girls make friends and develop socially. “They are no longer introverted,” Warren says. “They can interact with the other kids and deal with the situations the dance class provides.”

Last year, Alexis and Josie participated in their class dance recital. After the performance, Chafin says the crowd gave the dance class two standing ovations.

“I cried, cried, and cried some more,” Warren says. “A year ago, they wouldn’t talk. Now, they are so happy to be in the same class with other girls.”

Warren thinks that Chafin is the best teacher for this group of children. “Julie’s really good at what she does,” Warren says. “Josie was really scared of the music playing, but Julie was able to calm her down and get her to participate.”

With the class adding three more students this year, Chafin is optimistic. “Lots of people are not aware of this, so when news gets out there about the class, I think it will explode,” Chafin says.

Rogols says the children aren’t the only ones who benefit from the class. “We feel amazing for doing this,” Rogols says. “It’s all about these kids and providing them a chance to dance.” 🇺🇸



Ruby Rawlins poses for a photo after dance practice.

ohio style



Hannah Layne and instructor Julie Chafin stretch before dance practice begins.

Movement on stage

At the dress rehearsal, Chafin allows the children to perform on the stage to help them feel comfortable before the recital.

When

Friday night and Saturday afternoon, first weekend of June.

Where

Teavys Valley High School in Ashville.



Shu-Qi Sue Chen and student share a moment of victory.

Cultural Connection

Founder promotes learning beyond language

By KATIE HENDERSHOT

During a routine Tuesday afternoon lesson at the Athens Chinese Culture Center, while some students watched a video on traditional Chinese culture dance, 11-year-old Alison Russ recited sentences and arranged magnetic Mandarin words on a board.

Working to arrange the words just right, she translated, “I love my teacher.”

The center, which was founded by Shu-Qi Sue Chen, is about a lot more than learning about Chinese culture—although that is a big part of it. The

center is also about making friends and bringing students together by creating a family-like atmosphere.

“I think we’re trying to blend the discipline of the East with the fun of the West,” Chen’s business assistant, Amber Duff, says of the different teaching styles in the Eastern and Western hemispheres. Duff has two children learning Mandarin at the center.

This summary seems fitting for the venture that started out of Chen’s home shortly after she moved to Athens from Dalian, China in 1999 to join her husband, a long-time professor at Ohio University.

Now, many locations later, the center is operating out of Morrison Elementary School in Athens as part of a transition period.

Currently, nine children are regular students, meaning they spend two hours at least two days a week honing their skills and demonstrating their dedication to learning the language.

“It really is a family type of feeling every time you come here,” Duff says. “There’s always lots of hugs and smiles and encouragement. We share food and holidays. Some really good friendships have been made here.”

In the past, as many as 30 students have been enrolled in the program. She and Duff say they hope to work back up to that goal as they settle into their new home.

Chen and her two teachers aim to move toward an immersion-style language school by introducing the language from the moment students walk through the door.

“A bilingual mind has a lot more advantages,” Liang Tao, an associate professor of linguistics at Ohio University, says. One of those advantages, Tao explains, is that students have an added appreciation for different cultures.

Chen says that learning Mandarin, which is one of the fastest growing languages in the world, can be useful, especially in job hunting abroad.

“We need American people going [to China] to teach English,” Chen says. Recently one of her students went to China in search of a teaching job.

“

It really is a family type of feeling every time you come here. There’s always lots of hugs and smiles and encouragement.”

-Amber Duff
Business assistant at the Center


The center doesn’t just teach children Mandarin. Chen also works with high-school students and adults by teaching them language, tai chi, calligraphy, cooking, and other aspects of Chinese culture.

“The Chinese culture is beautiful and there was obviously a market for people who wanted to learn the language,” Duff says.

International students at Ohio University have also utilized the center.

“Sometimes it can be very isolating to just be on campus and not know the language, so she wants to invite the students in so they can have a ‘home away from home,’” Duff says. “They get to learn the culture of Athens.”

Chen is passionate about her students both old and new, showing off pictures of past classes, plaques she and her students earned at festivals for participating in dance, and recent projects her students have made.

“I just like the children very much,” she says. “I want to share Chinese culture with many.” 

Mandarin 101: Words and pronunciation

PEOPLE

I = 我 [wo]

You = 你 [ni]

We = 我们 [wo-men]

Mother = 妈妈 [ma-ma]

Father = 爸爸 [ba-ba]

Friend = 朋友 [peng-you]

Family = 家庭 [jia-ting]

Teacher = 老师 [lao-shi]

Student = 学生 [xue-sheng]

GREETINGS

Hello = 你好 [ni-hao]

Good morning = 早上好 [zao-shang-hao]

Goodbye = 再见 [zai-jian]

Goodnight = 晚安 [ni-hao]

Thank you = 谢谢 [xie-xie]

You’re welcome = 不客气 [bu-ke-qi]

Sorry = 对不起 [dui-bu-qi]

Merry Christmas = 圣诞快乐 [sheng-dan-kuai-le]

Happy New Year = 新年快乐 [xin-nian-kuai-le]

Strength Beyond Barriers

Danie Dane brings a face and force to cystic fibrosis

By MAURA MCNAMEE Photos by HE FENG

Danie Dane doesn't have much free time. In the past year, she's earned her EMT paramedic certificate from Hocking College, trained for a bodybuilding competition and entered her last semester of college, all while working two jobs.

Last May, however, Dane found time to organize a campus-wide fundraiser also meant to increase awareness of cystic fibrosis as part of a creative submission application for the AbbVie CF Scholarship. AbbVie sponsors a yearly contest that provides scholarships for higher education pursuits for up to 40 participants who have CF.

CF affects 30,000 people in the U.S., including Dane, and 70,000 worldwide. People with CF inherit

a defective gene that causes the body to produce a mucus that builds up in the lungs and other organs. The mucus can cause severe inflammation in the lungs, leading to infections, according to The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation's website. The buildup also prevents enzymes in the digestive system from properly breaking down food and absorbing nutrients.

May is National Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month, and as part of her creative project, Dane visited classes to speak about her condition and her goals for the fundraiser.

"My doctor sent me information about the scholarship and I actually wasn't going to do it at first, but then some friends talked me into it," Dane says. "We had to do a creative project so I did a PowerPoint of



Dane spots for another student at her job in Hocking student center's gym.

“ I don’t look at it as all bad, it’s just who I am, that’s all I know. To me, that’s normal.”

-Danie Dane

my life and the event here I did at Hocking. I went into classes, I gave a little spiel about why I was doing it, and we actually raised just under \$1,000 for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.”

Part of Dane’s support system comes from Michael Whittemore, a student affairs coordinator for the Hocking College’s School of Public Safety. Though she approached Whittemore for suggestions and support early on in the planning process, Dane wanted to do all of the work herself.

“She did a lot of the legwork, it was pretty cool to see that,” Whittemore says. “She was telling me all of these ideas she wanted to do, this and that, but she didn’t even consider all the help she could get around campus. She was already doing so much legwork on her own. I helped her by supporting her and directing her on where to go for support.”

The event was a success on campus: 40 other students attended, along with Dane’s friends, family and Hocking College staff members. Dane sold t-shirts and made CF fact cards taped onto purple balloons, which were released by the attendees.

Whittemore says Dane and her campaign taught him much more than the life-altering effects of CF.

“Danie is just a very vibrant, bright person,” he says. “She’s got a life-threatening illness, and you’d never know it. I realized that I learned more about Danie than anything.

“Yeah, I picked up on some of the facts of cystic fibrosis—it’s a nasty disease. But I learned that that girl’s got some unbelievable heart.”

Though Dane did not receive the AbbVie scholarship this year, she said she is glad to have taken the chance to spread awareness about the disease.

“Raising awareness is not about just doing it, it’s about explaining it,” she says.

Dane has what she calls a “light case of CF,” and she is able to live normally. She still gets hospitalized two to three times a year, and has undergone 16 surgeries, endured 18 PICC lines (IV tubes of antibiotics) and a feeding tube placement. But although she has CF, she doesn’t feel like a victim of the disease.

“I don’t look at it as all bad, it’s just who I am, that’s all I know,” she says. “To me, that’s normal.”

Dane, who is originally from Seven Mile, Ohio, says she hopes to come back to Hocking in the spring




Second-year Hocking College paramedic student Danie Dane works hard to raise awareness about cystic fibrosis.

to do another fundraiser. Aside from organizing fundraising campaigns, she spends time working at the Hocking College student center gym and at Goodfella’s Pizza in Athens. Her bodybuilding competitions also take up much of her time: five to six-day-a-week workouts, including cardio, fill up her schedule, alongside her regularly scheduled classes.

She participated in the National Physique Committee’s (NPC) National Qualifier competition at Ohio State in September, where she came in 12th place out of 14 entrants in the women’s figure category. Her plan for the next year is to continue following a diet high in protein and calories in order to gain up to 30 pounds of muscle, so she’ll have an even better shot at the 2015 NPC championships.

As far as raising awareness of CF, Dane says she encourages everyone, not just those affected, to take time to gain a little knowledge about the disease.

“Just look it up,” she says. “Even if you tell one person that didn’t know, that’s one person that didn’t know [who now knows].

“The word ‘CF’ is getting out there, and that’s the biggest thing.” 

Waverly's Fresh Monger

Owner's weekly coastal
commute means business

By ARIELLE J. PATTERSON

Clams casino, open oysters and Maryland style crab cakes all in Pike County? No, it is not a dream; it's a meal at The Grand Restaurant and Tavern.

The Grand offers Waverly residents a taste of the shore by serving fresh-caught seafood delivered from Ocean City, Maryland. Owner Phil Sager drives between Waverly and Ocean City to supply his restaurant and treat landlocked Pike County to a unique dining experience.

During Christmas 2004, Sager returned to his hometown of Waverly to see that a lot of old buildings were being demolished in town. One of those buildings was The Grand Hotel. Sager says he thought back to his younger days and remembered the good times he had at the hotel. "That's when I got the bright idea to restore it," Sager says. "It's been a project ever since."

When Sager moved to Maryland, he fell in love with the local seafood. Maryland is known for its shore cuisine so he wanted a way to bring that same feel back to his hometown. "I wanted to give people inland a chance to visit the beach," Sager says.

In 2009, Sager took the risk of turning The Grand into a restaurant that specializes in seafood. He says he was nervous in the beginning because diners were unfamiliar with the cuisine. Though slow at first, locals warmed up to the new menu.

Sager says most Pike County residents, especially the older ones, have not traveled as far east as Maryland. He says he definitely took a risk opening a niche restaurant like The Grand in a meat-and-potatoes town. "Their seafood primarily comes from a supply house or frozen from a box," Sager says of other local options.

Each week, Sager finds out what the restaurant needs and picks it up from the docks and fish markets in Ocean City. Every Thursday morning, he drives the shipment to the restaurant and stays the weekend. Sager has lived in Maryland for 30 years and



Phil Sager holds fresh mahi-mahi from one of his trips to Maryland. *Photo provided*

still loves the drive. Sager's daughter and his ex-wife manage the restaurant during the week while Sager is on the road or in Ocean City. For them, seafood has become a family business.

One of the most popular dishes on the menu is the seafood platter. It comes with: flounder filets, scallops, crab cakes, steamed shrimp, and bacon wrapped shrimp with a hickory smoke barbeque sauce.

The Grand's recipe for Maryland crab cakes, the restaurant's most-popular standalone dish, was submitted to *Time* magazine by Maryland governor Martin O'Malley.

Chillicothe resident Chuck Dunlap says he had never seen them take a live lobster out of the tank and cook it. "It was cooked perfectly and served as fresh as you will ever get in Southern Ohio," Dunlap posts on Facebook.

Local Dave Fosson commends Sager on his hard work. "I truly appreciate what a local entrepreneur is doing for a depressed area of Ohio," Fosson says in a Facebook review. Other diners praise the large portion sizes and, of course, great food.

Now that The Grand offers a taste of the East Coast, Sager says he has no plans on changing anything else. He's enjoying where his restaurant is at right now and is looking forward to more years of success and seafood. 🍷

Time-Tasted Traditions

The buzz at Busy Bee Restaurant

By ARIELLE J. PATTERSON Photos by HE FENG

Family ties and a long history in Marietta make Busy Bee Restaurant the ideal place for old-school diner food at old-school prices.

Current owner Donna English began her career at the Busy Bee Restaurant as a teenager. She was a waitress alongside her sister Georgeanna Wade while their mother was a cook. “I’ll never forget coming in before school and getting a doughnut with my sister,” English says.

Busy Bee first opened in the early 1950s, when “mom and pop” restaurants were common. A “mom and pop” is a small, family-owned business. Today, that type of niche restaurant isn’t as common so when the Marietta restaurant was put up for sale in November 2007, English saw an opportunity.

English says she felt the community needed a restaurant like Busy Bee. Her long time history in the area benefited her when her sister married the son of the former owner. English knew how much the restaurant meant to her and her family, so she bought Busy Bee in March 2008.

According to *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 60 percent of hospitality facilities fail in the first three years. But with a strong community response, Busy Bee did not have this problem. “Everyone enjoyed it being back opened,” English says. “It’s kind of like a landmark in Marietta.”

The only change to the restaurant is the new vintage antique store, *Whispers from the Past*. “We opened that a couple months ago, it was just a room that was empty,” English says. She says that with her friend Ronnie Davis, she came up with an idea to fix up the vacant room and turn it into something usable. They bought antiques to sell, because antiques has become a popular hobby in Marietta.

Despite the decades that have gone by since the original restaurant opened, English has not changed much with the feel, menu or the prices of the restaurant. Diners praise the family friendly atmosphere and the delicious, affordable food. People are often surprised at the generous portion sizes. Some of Busy Bee’s most popular menu items are classic diner fare: fluffy

pancakes, scrambled eggs with cheese, and burgers.

Nancy O’Donnell and her husband were passing through Marietta from Westlake in early October and decided to eat breakfast at Busy Bee. “I always love trying local places instead of chain restaurants,” O’Donnell says. “They had the best breakfast at a good price. I’m glad we stopped.”

English says she has no plans to change the “mom and pop home cooking” Busy Bee is known for. “I’ve tried to keep it the same as it was back then, especially with the specials and all the recipes they had,” she says. 🇺🇸



Waitress Michelle Boyce brings diners two trays of Busy Bee’s popular cheeseburgers and fried chicken.



Feline Fine

Bobcat population back on prowl

By CODY LINN

Lynx rufus, otherwise known as the bobcat, is a feral cat native to Ohio. Bobcats, however, are hard to spot statewide, because they are solitary and territorial animals.

But don't let their lack of visibility fool you. Suzie Prange, a Wildlife Research Biologist for the Division of Wildlife, says that Southeast Ohio is a "real hotspot" for bobcats. "Their main range is Southeast Ohio, from Guernsey down to Scioto," she says,

adding that the best area to spot bobcats is in Noble County. "We've got a really dense pocket centered around Noble County and eastern Ohio." Prange says that though Noble and surrounding counties are the most densely populated area for bobcats, there are also pockets of bobcats in Athens and Vinton counties.

Bobcats have made quite the comeback in Ohio. According to the Ohio Division of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, bobcats used to roam across the

Both photos provided by Tim Daniel, ODNR.

state and were seen often. That took a change for the worse. By 1850, too many human inhabitants had settled in Ohio and the species was nearly driven out of the state. The bobcats' decline was slow but steady until they were placed on Ohio's first endangered species list in 1974.

Since then, bobcat population has rebounded, with sightings becoming more frequent each year. In 2012, they were moved from the endangered species designation and put on the threatened species list. Then in 2014, just two years later, bobcats were removed from the threatened species list altogether. There was a record amount of sightings in Ohio in 2013, with 200 verified sightings of bobcats—up from 169 in 2012.

One reason for the bobcat's return is the fallowing of farms. With agricultural inactivity, trees started to reclaim the farmland, giving the bobcat the cover it needed to come back after being pushed out many years ago. Fallowing, paired with early succession in forest regeneration, has helped the bobcat population flourish. Early succession, when forests are cut to help create new forests that are more dense and verdant, also helps increase bobcat population. "Bobcats are forest species in Ohio, but they do need openings," she says, explaining that they need more cover to hunt or to be protected while they have their young. Brushy places also tend to have more prey species like rabbits and other small mammals.

“ We've got a really dense pocket centered around Noble County and eastern Ohio.”

Suzie Prange
*Wildlife Research Biologist
for the Division of Wildlife*

A 2010 survey about forest resource assessment found that Ohio was losing its young brushy habitat. Nate Jester, Southern District Manager for ODNR, said that this habitat is important for Ohio. "That young component is a critical habitat type that a lot of different species are dependent upon," Jester says.

That forest has a lot of ground-dwelling food for predatory species like the bobcat. Forest management allows ODNR to keep Ohio forests healthy. To fund resources and staff to manage forests, ODNR sells timber it cuts down. The agency assesses the optimal amount of timber to be cut down and sells extraneous timber through a bidding system with contractors. Proceeds from the sales are split between the department, which uses them for forest management, and the community where the timber is cut. It's a sort of harmonious ecosystem, good for land, communities, and a flourishing population of Ohio bobcats. 🇺🇸

BOBCAT FACTS



Scientific class: Mammalia

Family: Felidae

Habitat: Woodlands, swamplands

Height: 20-25 in (51-63 cm)

Length: 25-42 in (63-106 cm)

Weight: 15-30 pounds

Top Speed: 25 mph

Diet: rabbits, rodents, birds

Average lifespan: 15-25 years

Other details:

- Most abundant wildcat in the U.S.
- Gets name from its stumpy tail.
- Primarily nocturnal.
- Males can travel 20 miles per night.
- Good swimmers, though they rarely swim.
- Kittens stay with mother in a sheltered den for 6-9 months before venturing out.



The short line rail that opened in the Hannibal Industrial Park services several companies located there.

Hannibal Back on Track?

Investors tap into Monroe County's natural gas potential and produce economic hope

By HANNAH YANG Photos by BRIEN VINCENT

A couple years ago, miles of railroad were overgrown with trees springing up in between the tracks, perhaps symbolizing the loss of its original purpose and foreshadowing the derailing of a major player in Monroe's economy.

Originally built by Pennsylvania Railroad to service Ormet—an aluminum smelting plant—more than a decade ago, the short rail was neglected by the company. The rail was kept intact in case the plant decided to ever use it, says Mike Filoni, vice president of sales and marketing for Carload Express, Inc. (a short line railroad and transportation company).

After searching for a railroad that could access gas producers within the Utica and Marcellus Shale Fields, Carload Express finally found the line it was looking for—the dormant short rail. The company decided to rehabilitate the short rail in December 2012. After an estimated \$1.8 million investment, the short rail, renamed the Ohio Terminal Railway, commenced operations in April 2013.

Some believe the short rail's reactivation will stimulate the local economic growth and development. Already more businesses are moving into Hannibal Industrial Park, which has access to the rail.

“

[The companies] probably would not have come to the industrial park if it weren't for the railroad.”

Mike Filori

Vice president of sales and marketing for Carload Express, Inc.



A train parked in the Hannibal Industrial Park. The short line rail in the park recently came out of dormancy and now is connected to the Norfolk Southern Railroad.

“Those are businesses that heavily depend on railroad [transportation],” Filoni says. “From my standpoint, there’s only so much material that can be moved on the highway. [The companies] probably would not have come to the industrial park if it weren’t for the railroad.”

But Monroe’s recovery derailed after Ormet, which was the largest employer in the county, closed its doors in October 2013. Ormet’s closing sent tremors through Monroe. Some felt the aftershock more than others, says Megan Ensinger, Hannibal native and an Ohio University 2013 alumna.

“Many of my friends either worked for or had family who worked for Ormet and were out of work when the plant finally closed down,” Ensinger says. “Many people had to relocate to find work. It was a huge blow to the community as a whole, as it was the loss of an industry that most of the town’s value centered around.”

Monroe has about 14,500 residents and a civil labor force of around 5,300, according to Ohio’s Bureau of Labor Statistics. While Ohio’s unemployment is at 5.7 percent state-wide, the unemployment rate in the county is at 10.1 percent, highest in the state as of September 2014. According to the Columbus Dispatch, the closing cost 700 people their jobs.

Because the county funds were dried up, three elementary schools in the area (Sardis, Hannibal and Powhatan) now feed into the same high school, Hannibal’s River High School. The restructuring was intended to streamline teaching and provide additional arts and specialized lessons.

“It was the first time a levy had passed since before I was born,” Ensinger says. “But the funds quickly ran out and cuts were made to programs like music, art and foreign language. The money just isn’t there, partly due to the loss of Ormet.”


Many remain hopeful about the economic growth of the county, with outside investors looking to break into the natural gas industry. Monroe has become a recent hotbed for gas and oil production. “In the past year, there has been a major influx of companies in the oil and gas industry hoping to tap into the pockets of natural gas under Monroe County, which may be quite extensive,” Ensinger says.

One of those outside companies, Houston-based Appalachia Resins, leased 50 acres of land in Salem Township to build a cracker plant expected to begin operation in 2019, according to bizjournals.com. This plant would have the ability to take natural gas, like ethane, and make it usable for the plastic industry. Along with that, there is potential that the plant would produce added value for the Appalachian gas industry, and that’s where the Ohio Terminal Railway would come into the picture.

“The proposed ethane cracker/polyethylene plant would also use rail for outbound shipments of polyethylene,” says Jason Hamman of the Monroe County Port Authority. Hamman adds that the plant has the potential to add an additional 150-200 jobs and spark a \$1 billion capital investment.

Already, the natural gas and shale industry is considered a lifeline to the county’s economic future. Some residents in Monroe seek to reap the benefits of having an abundant source of natural gases.

“Many gas wells have been installed,” Ensinger says. “One is only about a half mile from my parents’ house and some residents are receiving considerable sums in royalties from their mineral rights.”

Despite the economic difficulties the county experienced after Ormet’s closing, Ensinger believes that it’s full speed ahead for Monroe. “I think everyone is hoping that oil and gas will get the county back on its feet,” she says. 

local motion



Tom Greene's house has been a big part of Gallipolis in Bloom's success.

Bloom Town

Civic spirit grows in Gallipolis

By BEZ SACIRI Photos by DAN KUBUS

Gallipolis has always been a peaceful place to live and visit, but Karen Smith and Lori Kelly were hoping to come up with a way to set Gallipolis apart from surrounding cities.

Kelly, who works for Bob's Market and Greenhouses, Inc., thought Gallipolis would be more visually appealing if its homes were well picked up and surrounded by flowers. Smith, who is a former business owner in Gallipolis, liked the idea, so she presented it to Gallipolis' county government, which instituted Gallipolis in Bloom.

In 2005, Gallipolis started promoting its new organization by encouraging community members to make their yards look attractive with flowers and trees. Soon after, area homes began displaying hanging baskets of flowers, which helped raise awareness of the organization.

By 2006, Gallipolis in Bloom—a subsidiary of America in Bloom—was in full effect.

"I wanted to make a positive impact on this community," Kelly says. "I thought it would be easy for us to form an organization because we already had some houses that took their property seriously. It's also an organization where it's easy to join and help out."

Gallipolis in Bloom president Bev Dunkle says its goals are intertwined. "We want to improve community involvement, raise environmental issues and enhance our community," Dunkle says.

Gallipolis in Bloom leaves few rocks unturned when it comes to increasing community interest in the organization. It uses social media—mainly Facebook—to release special announcements, places announcements on the radio and alerts the local newspaper, the Gallipolis Tribune, yielding numerous

stories about Gallipolis in Bloom. But the organization also spiritedly places signs in yards recognizing winners of “Yard of the week” and “Business of the week.”

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Gallipolis has 3,644 residents. Any of those residents can volunteer for the organization. Gallipolis in Bloom’s meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday of each month, and people can call Dunkle and Kim Canaday, who is Gallipolis in Bloom’s volunteer coordinator, if they are interested.

With people from many areas of Gallipolis participating in the cause, the relationship between the organization and the city is becoming stronger by the day. Gallipolis in Bloom is limited in the work it can do in the winter time. So in 2013, Gallipolis created Gallipolis in Lights. It’s the same concept as Gallipolis in Bloom, but it takes place during the winter months. The main attraction is Christmas lights, which illuminate trees in Gallipolis City Park.

The organization is constantly coming up with new ideas and methods to help make Gallipolis in Bloom more prolific in the community. Volunteers planted flowers around Gallipolis City Park to make the park more identifiable among visitors.

The organization was invited to the National America in Bloom Symposium, which was held in Philadelphia from Oct. 2-4. Canaday, Dunkle and representatives from Bob’s Market were among the attendees. During the event, members of participating communities interacted with one another, and on Oct. 4, Gallipolis in Bloom and the other communities learned the judges’ results.

In June, judges from the symposium graded Gallipolis on the job Gallipolis in Bloom did to promote and execute its mission. The judges graded Gallipolis in Bloom on six criteria, including floral display, which Gallipolis in Bloom won in 2006 and 2013.

In the future, Dunkle is hopeful that fresh faces will get involved and lead the organization to new heights.

“I’d like to see growth in the organization,” Dunkle says. “I also want to see more members because I’ve seen a lot of the same faces for the last nine years.”

Gallipolis in Bloom does more than encourage people to plant flowers and keep their yards clean. It’s also raising the morale of everyone who is associated with Gallipolis.

“It’s been a wonderful addition to our community,” Canaday says. “This organization has increased the environmental effort, which helps make the city neat, tidy and clean. It gives people who visit the city a good first impression.”

FIND OUT MORE ONLINE

<http://www.facebook.com/GallipolisInBloom>

<http://www.americainbloom.org>



Steve and Linda Chapman have planted many flowers behind their home, including these yellow mums.



The flowers on the Bandstand in Gallipolis City Park add to the visual appeal of the city.



Begonias also liven up the Chapmans’ yard.



The view from Mound Hill Cemetery in Gallipolis. The Ohio River separates Gallipolis from West Virginia.



Mystery Loves Company

Zanesville Community
Theatre puts on Agatha
Christie's *The Hollow*

17-year-old Cary Underwood
applies lipstick in the dressing
room, preparing for her first
"grown-up" role as Midge.



Photos by ROYLE MAST



Steven Hendershott as Dr. John Cristow



Katelyn Baughman as Doris



Aaron Chase as Edward Angkatell

The Cast

The stage is empty and guests have yet to fill their seats. The front house of the Zanesville Community Theatre is quiet, but the back dressing room is bustling with commotion and laughter. The actors are getting ready for their fourth performance of Agatha Christie's *The Hollow*. The Theatre's president, Jillian



Jared Gantzer as Detective Sergeant Penny



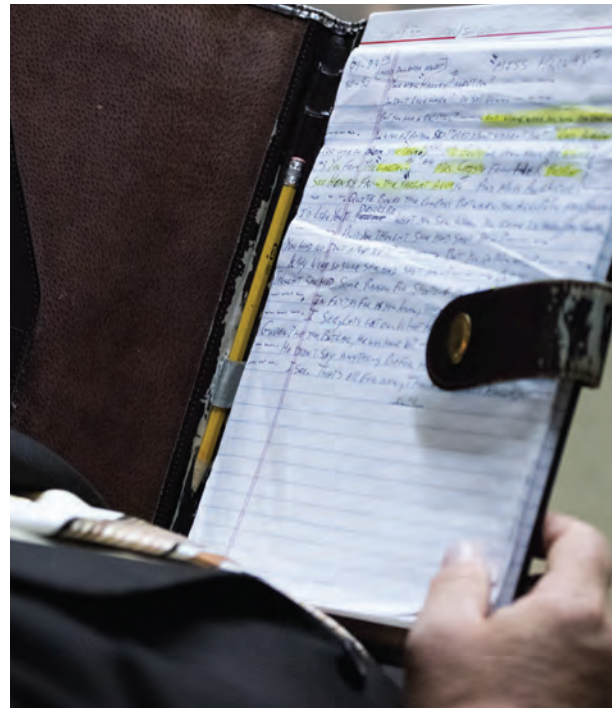
Eric Blake as Sir Henry Angkatell

Von Gunten, is sitting in a chair getting her hair done by the show's director, Melanie—who also happens to be Jillian's mother. Sarah Gantzer, who plays Gerda Cristow, prances in with real-life husband Jared in tow. She perches in front of a mirror, applying red lipstick and singing along to a *Chicago* soundtrack tune, "Cell Block Tango," as Jillian teases her. On stage the actors compose themselves with seriousness and vigor, but behind the scenes they are just one big happy family.



Cary Underwood as Midge Harvey, as pictured on cover.

Top left:
Jan Smith, who plays Inspector Colquhoun of Scotland Yard, reviews his lines before the show.



Top middle:
The Theatre houses 92 seats, only 19 of which were left open Friday evening, not accounting for walk-ins.



Below:
Von Gunten and Hendershott share a moment on stage, as their characters participate in a secret love affair.





Above:

The costume closet has a large collection of both new and vintage clothing, most of which is donated by community members and show participants.

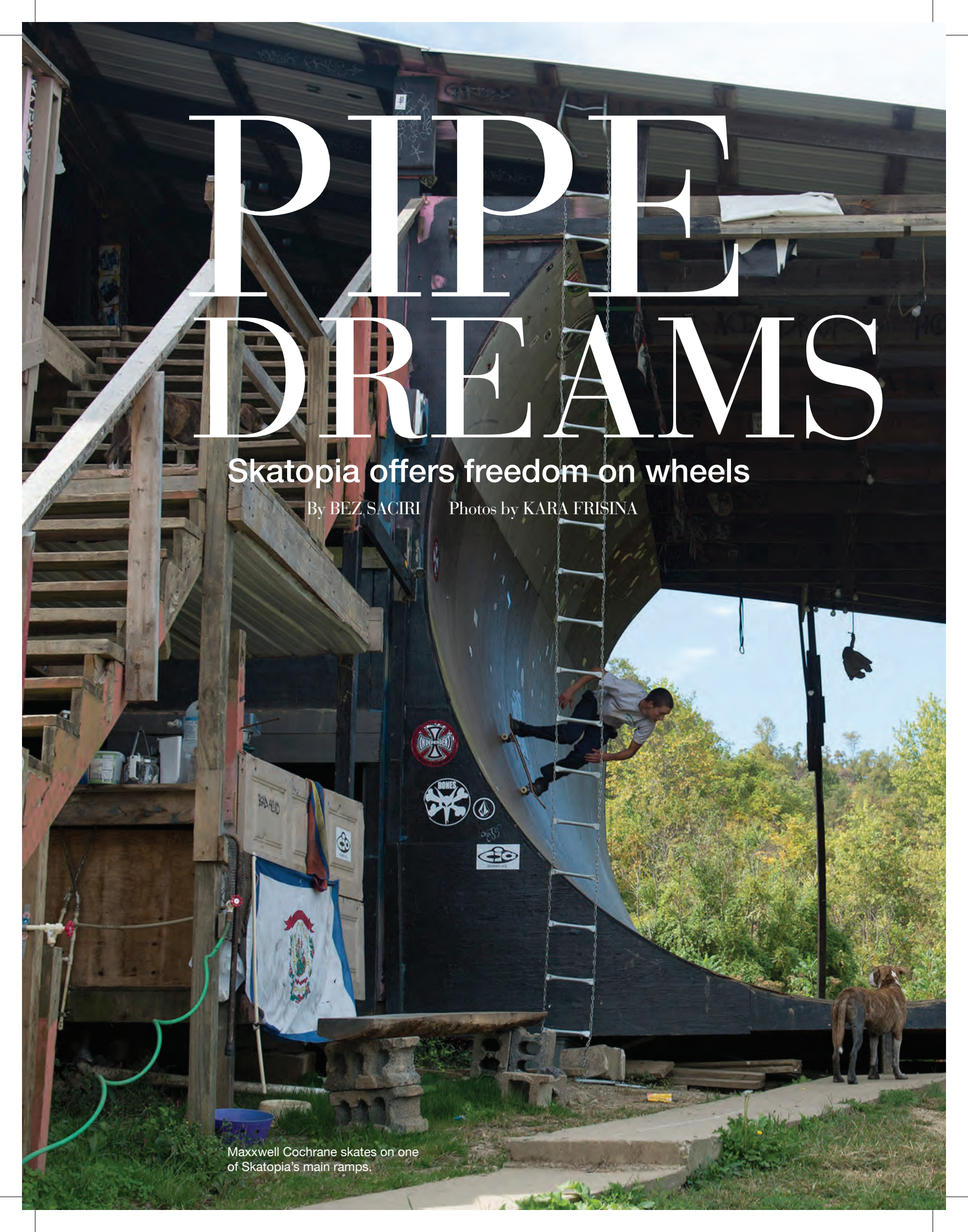
Near left:

Von Gunten's, Underwood's and Chase's characters speculate on the odd behaviors of Lady Lucy Angkatell, played by Sally Goins.


PIPE DREAMS

Skatopia offers freedom on wheels

By BEZ SACIRI Photos by KARA FRISINA



Maxwell Cochrane skates on one of Skatopia's main ramps.

A large, dark wooden skate ramp structure is the central focus of the image. The ramp is curved and has a lightning bolt symbol on its side. In the foreground, a wooden sign is mounted on a post. The sign has three horizontal planks. The top plank reads "Keep Havin A Good Day!". The middle plank has the word "RAMP" written in large, pink and white block letters. The bottom plank has the word "LOCALS" written in large, pink and white block letters. A small red and white sticker with the word "SKATOPIA" is visible on the left side of the sign. The background shows a blue sky with light clouds and a dense forest of green trees.

Brewce Martin has skating in his blood. It doesn't matter where Brewce lives; he always builds ramps on which to skate. Skating is what makes his life exciting.

He has always wanted to own a skate park, and in 1995 he finally got his wish.

Brewce and his son, Brandon, who was 10 years old at the time, were evicted from their West Virginia home for building skateboard ramps around the property. After the eviction, Brewce looked for a place to create his own skate park. A friend who worked at a pharmacy in Athens told him about the 88 acres of property for sale in Meigs County. Brewce was so determined to make his own park there that a wooden skating bowl was put in that area before even building his house.



Above: Maxxwell Cochrane stands in Skatopia's skateboard museum.

Skatopia might be Meigs County's finest tourist attraction. It has countless ramps, a print shop, and a skateboard museum that features about 2,600 boards. Skatopia has also hosted more than 1,000 musical bands.

Brewce believes the park provides an outlet for both new and frequent visitors to escape their troubles. "This park gives people the freedom to enjoy skating," Brewce says. "One of the big things that make this park so successful is that people don't have to pay to get into the park. We're not trying to make rules, either."

Skatopia is located in one of the poorest regions in Ohio, but Brewce still asks people if they can donate money to help fund projects. "If you can't afford to help us, it's not a big deal," he says. "We just hope people keep coming."

“ Enough people have believed in the park to help it go. Meigs is a poor community, but the community support has been huge.”

Brewce Martin
Owner of Skatopia

Brewce says there are many reasons why Skatopia is a great place to skate. "Our park is spread out over many acres," Brewce says. "We have indoor and outdoor features to the park, the skateboard museum, and I have even preserved the antiques that were here when I first started building the skate park."



November 2015 will mark 20 years that Brewce has owned Skatopia, and he acknowledges that many people have contributed to the park's longevity. "Enough people have believed in the park to help it go," he says. "Meigs is a poor community, but the community support has been huge. The park is still growing, too."


Brandon's interest in the park and has helped Brewce run the business. The younger Martin says he currently runs about 60 percent of the business; he plans the events and runs the Skatopia Facebook page and screen-print shop. The shop sells stickers, banners and T-shirts, among other items.

Brandon is particularly excited about the new bowl that is being built, but for him, the equipment is not the best feature of the park. "I

really enjoy the beautiful, scenic view and the way the environment makes you feel," Brandon says. "It's kind of a sense of serenity. I also enjoy meeting the huge variety of fantastic individuals that come and visit the park."

With new projects in the works and skateboarders near and far coming into the park on a regular basis, Brandon thinks Skatopia will continue to grow in the years to come even beyond the skate park.

"We are trying to expand on the community side by planting fruit trees and having a sustainable garden," Brandon says. "But we are also looking to expand our museum for the preservation of skateboarding history so the essence of skateboarding is not lost."

For more information: www.skatopia.org 

Above: Timothy Tice says he still skates with owner Brewce Martin.

Vision Quest

The truth is out there

By KATIE HENDERSHOT Photos by BRIEN VINCENT

Patrick Quackenbush has led many ghost tours for the curious-minded. In October, he taught Ohio University students about the history of the Lake Hope area.



A young girl stands shrouded in darkness, visible by the glow of the candle she grips between her hands. The girl, head tilted downward and eyes ominous, peers out from the cover of the second in a series of seven books about the paranormal in Ohio. But the young girl isn't a ghost—she is the daughter of two Southeast Ohio authors who run the Haunted Hocking Investigation Team.

Patrick and Jannette Quackenbush have been married for 30 years and have spent 16 of them uncovering their passion for ghost hunting. During that time, the couple has toured the area to uncover the stories of locations that many believe could be haunted because of some strange occurrences.

THE TEAM'S CRAFT

Drawing from the background they received in history and nature as students at Hocking College, the Quackenbushes launch paranormal investigations throughout the year based both on submissions from community members and the couple's curiosity. Each story they investigate is met with intense scrutiny. "You have to convince me that your story is real," Patrick explains of the approach he and his wife take toward submissions.

Over the years, the couple has investigated almost 600 stories, with two to three big investigations each year. The Quackenbushes take a basic approach to most investigations, using audio, video and still images.

Jannette often scours old newspapers to uncover new stories for the couple to explore. "I really, really enjoy finding the old, historical ones that nobody has," she says. "It's almost like a high when I get that ghost story and find that it's real."

The work is far from over once the couple decides which story to investigate next. They must verify the information of the story, even checking whether the ghost in question ever existed as a person. Basically, the couple needs to substantiate the stories. Once Patrick and Jannette verify background information, they head to locations to conduct a scientific investigation, using their tools to search for definite proof.

The Quackenbushes frequent events in Southeast Ohio, partner with organizations and even help at fundraisers. The team also routinely takes groups out on tours of locations they have investigated and shares information about the area, the folklore and how to use ghost-hunting gear like the pros.

"One of the things we pride ourselves in at Haunted Hocking is that we make it accessible to you. Our goal is that we love to see other people

“ One of the things we pride ourselves in at Haunted Hocking is that we make it accessible to you. Our goal is that we love to see other people having a good time with it.”

Patrick Quackenbush
*Owner of the Haunted Hocking
Investigation Team*

having a good time with it,” Patrick says. “Anybody can do this. It’s a really cool, fun and fascinating pastime. It’s definitely something we love to share with other people.”

Each ghost hunt is different for the team, and the results vary. Sometimes, investigations have interesting results, but other times nothing pans out. But the team won’t lie—even if attendees want evidence of the paranormal.

“I think a lot of times, people want to see things in images that they send us. You want to see things in images—orbs or other things, but you don’t,” Jannette says. “They may just be bugs or dust in pictures. A lot of times you need an EMF [electromagnetic field] meter or a camera there, a digital voice recorder so that if they see an orb or something like that, they also have other things to back it up.”

Patrick, who by day is a naturalist for Ohio State Parks in the Southeast District, will be the first to tell someone that the shadowy figure they’re seeing is just a deer. He also might treat the group to a little added fun by performing owl calls.

“We will not make it up. We will not fake it. There’s been many public ghost hunts [where] we’ve walked away without a thing,” he says. “But we’ve also had some really cool things happen at the public ghost hunts. We just never know what’s going to happen when we get out there.”

SCIENCE AND HISTORY COLLIDE

There will always be skeptics when it comes to the paranormal, which the Quackenbushes accept. Patrick considers himself to be the biggest skeptic when it comes to each individually submitted story. That’s why the team bases all of its investigations on science and history. The team checks the facts before an investigation is even launched, and once it is, scientific proof is needed.



The Lake Hope Iron Furnace is said to be a haunted location in Southeast Ohio, due to a night watchman who fell into the furnace and died in the town of Hope during the 1800s.

“It’s not set science—it’s new science,” Patrick says. “We’re using old science and old techniques in an attempt to develop new scientific attempts for this.”

The most commonly accepted principle in the science of ghost hunting is that ghosts are energy. That energy can manifest itself in a number of ways, whether through magnetic field manipulation, audio or video. The Quackenbushes have had experiences with each form.

“When we started doing this early on, people would say, ‘Wow, do you believe in ghosts?’” Patrick says. “I’m a true believer now. Way too many things have happened, way too many photographs to discount it anymore.”

By using a trove of gear, the Quackenbushes are able to detect any number of those manifestations. The team has an arsenal of methods for finding fields of energy, including EMF detectors and cameras that detect energy in spectrums beyond what the human eye can see. The team also carries a crystal on a string to confirm activity they’ve already found and brings it with them on public ghost hunts to teach people about the historical method, which has been used for centuries and is one of the oldest ways to detect energy fields, Patrick explains. When the crystal is held over an energy source, it gyrates.

“You can’t rely on any one [method]; you have



Above: Patrick shows students how dowsing rods can detect paranormal activity.

Below: A rock marks the entrance to the path leading to the Moonville Tunnel.





Patrick discusses the legend of the Hope Iron Furnace.

to use a combination,” Patrick says. “I work on the old Sherlock Theory. His old saying is that ‘when you have eliminated all the possibilities, whatever’s left, however improbable, must be the truth.’ That’s what we’re trying to do.”

Finding that truth isn’t always easy, though. Patrick notes that for every thousand pictures the team takes on an investigation, only one might have an interesting outcome.

The investigation begins long before the Quackenbushes load up their SUV with equipment. The couple spends plenty of time researching each area to gather the historical background of the site.

Southeast Ohio is an ideal backdrop for the investigation team. The rich history of the region contributes to the paranormal instances. Patrick explains that the days when iron and coal towns made the region the wealthiest in the state have provided many stories. “You’ve got all of these little iron and coal towns that are pretty much gone now, but they’ve left a mark behind of something,” he says. “If you do a little research, you find the everyday lives, the accidents, the murders, the suicides. A lot of those strong emotions add to that.”

When many think of the paranormal in Southeast Ohio, he notes, they naturally assume the former Athens Lunatic Asylum holds much of the region’s

hauntings. He explains that while the old asylum has plenty of history, the haunted aspects of the buildings are not as strong as many believe.

Places like the Hope Iron Furnace and the Moonville Tunnel provide even more haunted experiences.

THE GHOSTS OF MOONVILLE TUNNEL

The graffiti-littered walls of the Moonville Tunnel offer more history than words and drawings in vibrant hues would lead one to believe. But the tunnel is said to have more guests than those wielding cans of spray paint.

Patrick spent a crisp October evening showing the tunnel to Ohio University students in a learning community and teaching them the ghost stories of the area—with a little science and history mixed in. “My goal is to add no new ghost stories tonight,” Patrick warned before setting out on the ghost tour.

Prior to leading the students down a trail that leads to the tunnel, he explained the function of each piece of gear and passed equipment around to tentative participants. Calling volunteers forward, he showed how the bent pieces of metal he turned into dousing rods could reveal a possible spirit in the area.

When level and about ten inches apart above a person’s head, the two rods will cross each other. “You are a massive magnetic field,” Patrick told the students.

Bands of light from lanterns bobbed up and down on the 10-minute trek through the wooded area along a creek, making the path just barely visible to the students. Throughout the walk, the electromagnetic field (EMF) detectors lit up, dousing rods crisscrossed and the crystals drew careful circles, even when students held their hands completely still.

The phenomenon prompted Maddie Weir, a freshman in the learning community, to shriek and many other students to fidget uncomfortably. Patrick explained the story of how, in 1972, a woman drowned in the creek after falling from the train tracks that once ran over it.

The ghost stories were only the beginning of local lore. When the group reached the tunnel, Patrick had plenty to share, from the story of a young brakeman who was fatally injured in the tunnel to the tale of Baldie Keeton's murder. Though no one fell victim to small rocks and pebbles falling from overhead on the trip, Patrick explains that he believes Keeton to be the source of the oft-cited falling rocks. Keeton was found dead on the tracks one morning in the late 1880s. Police believe Keeton's death was a murder, but the culprit was never identified.

With many deaths cited at the tunnel, many of the students eagerly took their tools throughout the dark in hopes of a response. At the end, the EMF detectors repeatedly went off while an ovulus, a specific tool for ghost hunting that spirits can use to communicate with people, spewed garbled words. A circle of students huddled around one another, watching with wide eyes as the machines signaled alarm.

Though none of the words at the end of the tunnel were coherent, Patrick said that when he was setting up other gear at the front of the tunnel, he clearly heard the words "spirit" and "help" from the ovulus. He also reminded students to check the investigation team's website later on to see if any of the recorders picked up anything.

All possible supernatural experiences aside, Haunted Hocking sought to teach students one important lesson: how to be responsible ghost hunters. Patrick explained that gaining respect is a surefire way to gain access to places most people can't. He also warned students to receive prior permission before exploring any haunted sites. "We want to teach you how to be a ghost hunter," Patrick said. "But we want to teach you how to be a good ghost hunter." 🇺🇸



Tour participants gather around Patrick in the Moonville Tunnel.





WHERE DOVES FLY?

Controversy takes roost (again) in Ohio

By CODY LINN

People have been squabbling about dove hunting in Ohio for more than 50 years. But since the controversial practice was approved by voters in 1998, it has been increasing in popularity—especially in rural areas.

As early as 1963, the Ohio Legislature tried to reclassify the mourning dove as a game species, legalizing dove hunting, but all attempts have been thwarted without majority support. Then the Ohio Department of Wildlife joined the fray, establishing the state's first dove hunting season in 80 years—only to have a court order take it away a couple of years later. Finally in 1994 the Ohio General Assembly passed a house bill to allow dove hunting. But anti-hunting groups collected more than 100,000 signatures on a petition to make dove hunting a ballot issue in November 1998. sixty percent of voters cast ballots to allow mourning dove hunting, settling the battle between activists and hunters.



Hunter look for doves in the Spring Valley Wildlife area.

Those who hunt mourning doves enjoy it for its simplicity. “There is nothing real sophisticated to it,” Belmont County Game Warden Brian Baker says. Baker, who is both the game warden and a dove hunter, says one of the most challenging parts of dove hunting is finding a good spot to hunt, which “requires a little scouting.”

Julie Zickefoose, a naturalist, author and artist who opposes dove hunting, objects to the practice because there’s little meat provided by slain doves. “I always felt that hunting doves has a little more to do with target practice than food,” Zickefoose says. “I just don’t think that the mourning dove is much of a game bird. It doesn’t have much meat on it.”

There are many regulations governing mourning dove hunting. According to the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, because the mourning dove is a migratory bird, a bird that travels with the seasons, mourning dove hunting is regulated by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Goose and duck hunting are also regulated under this act.

One national regulation is that hunters can only use shotguns that hold three or fewer shells. The other major regulation is that hunters cannot hunt on a baited field. Federal regulators define baiting as placing on lands unshucked corn, wheat or other types of food the migratory birds feed on to lure doves. Hunters get an unfair advantage if doves are feeding on deposited foods: they’re easy targets. However, hunters can hunt fields on which items

were previously scattered for agricultural purposes.

Though the rules and regulations for dove hunting start at the national level, states can develop their own guidelines. States cannot loosen guidelines but can make them stricter. Ohio, for example, also prohibits the shooting of doves from wires, buildings and utility poles.

Each year, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service estimates how many doves are in the U.S. and then it develops dove hunting protocol for the season to ensure that population maintains stability.

Though some against dove hunting fear that the dove population will decline and the species will become extinct, experts say that hunting doves has little to no effect on the population.

“The population has been stable for decades,” Olentangy Research Station Project Leader and Supervisor of Wildlife at the Olentangy Research Station, Nathan Stricker, says. “We only harvest about 5 percent of the population in any given year.” Doves usually live for just two years. However, they typically lay three eggs each time they nest. Stricker says the high rate of turnover is why the dove population is not endangered by hunting. “Doves have a high reproductive rate and this helps keep the population stable,” Stricker says.

Baker, the game warden, said he agrees dove hunting does not affect the population of doves. “The effect on the population would be almost nil, especially in Ohio,” Baker says. According to

“I always felt that hunting doves has a little more to do with target practice than food.”

Julie Zickefoose
Naturalist, author and artist

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in the past ten years—during which dove hunting was legal in the state—there has not been a statistically significant change in state dove population.

Others who opposed the legalization of dove hunting were vegetarians who stood in principle against eating meat. But Zickefoose, who lives on a nature reserve in Appalachian Ohio and is regarded as a national expert in birding and natural history, also objects to dove hunters putting other birds in harm’s way. She says her concern is that hunters may not be able to tell whether they are actually shooting at a dove. “They are very, very fast flyers and they can look like a lot of different things on the wing,” Zickefoose says. “They are sort of shape-shifters.” She believes that other birds, such as robins and jays, could be misidentified by an inexperienced hunter and become victims of collateral kill.

Dove hunting is more popular in southern states because there is more seasonal stability in the south. With Ohio’s four seasons and eccentric weather, dove hunting is hindered by the elements. Baker says the prevalence of doves in any given hunting season depends on the weather. “During the first part of the season [Sept. 1-Nov. 9], they are abundant,” Baker says. Baker emphasized how cold fronts affect the dove’s migration—a cold front from the northwest part of the U.S. in the second part of the season, from Dec. 13 to Jan. 1, usually pushes more birds eastward.

ODNR is trying to promote dove hunting to increase its popularity. The department holds controlled hunts in wildlife areas, such as Rush Run in southwestern Ohio and Salt Fork State Park east of Zanesville, to help hunters become acclimated and gain experience with dove hunting. These controlled hunts allow beginners to develop their skills and help more seasoned hunters practice their aim.

Attempts to gain traction may reverse a decline in popularity in dove hunting in Ohio. From 2011 to 2012, U.S. Fish and Wildlife statistics estimate that active dove hunters in Ohio dropped from 14,200 to 8,600. Dove hunting’s best chance of survival in Ohio may be nested in the activity’s relative ease and low barrier of entry. “The equipment is very simple,” Baker says. “A chair, a gun, some shotgun shells and a little bit of scouting can put you on a pretty good dove hunt.”



Photos provided by TIM DANIEL, ODNR



Southern Hills Arts Council Executive Director Barbara Summers with sculpture by native Jacksonian Fletcher Benton.

Matron of *the ARTS*

Essence of local fests
centers on community
production

By MAURA MCNAMEE

Photos by CLARE GUCWA

Barbara Summers is no stranger to putting on productions. As a retired stage manager for Broadway and off Broadway shows, it's no wonder she performs with precision and passion in her current role as executive director for the Southern Hills Arts Council in Jackson.

This past fall, Summers and her team of volunteers and board members put on a show of their own: the 33rd Annual Foothills Arts Festival, a judged exhibition that hosts hundreds of artists from Ohio, Kentucky and West Virginia, featuring their works.

A woman with a long history of love for drama and the arts, Summers spent her theater career working diligently on productions such as "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" on Broadway and at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. She hadn't actually planned for a theatrical career path, though.

"My college degree is in secondary education and literature so I was training to become an English teacher," Summers says. "I figured that dramatic literature was a bit of what was going on in the field of English so I started in the theater. I took to it, I really loved it. So after I finished college, armed with my degree in education, instead of going into a teaching situation in a classroom, I ended up in theater."

Summers and her late husband, a costume designer named Caley Summers who also worked on Broadway, off-Broadway and various other companies, bought land in Ohio in 1971 for their eventual retirement home. They had originally planned to return to New York City after buying the 70-acre plot, but they fell in love with the land and moved there permanently in 1974. "It's hard to live in Manhattan," Summers explains. "It's not a place [where] I really wanted to grow old."

Summers never lost her love for the arts, however, and in 1984 she started volunteering with the Southern Hills Arts Council. She was promoted to executive director in 1987.

During her time working for the council, the search for a home base became a major priority; the council had held art classes, galleries and exhibitions at various locations throughout the years, but the venues were not fit for live performances—one of the council's main goals.

In 1996, the council obtained ownership to the once-abandoned Markay Theatre in downtown Jackson, and Summers has helped oversee the building's renovation, assisted in the programming of art classes and, most recently, planned for the opening of the Markay's auditorium.



The street entrance of the Markay Theatre in downtown Jackson. Once abandoned, the Markay is set to reopen this year.

“Sometime in 2015, we will open the theater and then we will feel as though we’ve completed our circle. We’ll be able to provide live performances as well as the various other art forms we already have. It’s pretty darn good for southern Ohio, in my opinion,” Summers says. “It’s been a long time coming. We’ve built it slowly as we’ve gone but I’m really happy to see the arts getting a wonderful toehold here.”

Summers and her production skills are tireless; nothing motivates her more than the people within the Jackson local arts community. Summers organized the Preview Reception, an event held at Canter’s Cave prior to the public viewing of the arts festival, where artists, sponsors and award patrons flowed through the door. Everyone was jovially greeted by name as Summers shook hands and handed out nametags, pointing out where in the gallery to begin.

Canter’s Cave, a 4-H camp and community building, is nestled in the backwoods of Jackson, surrounded by rolling hills and rocky paths. Inside, the space’s high ceilings and wood paneling lend a cozy atmosphere, perfect for an evening of the arts.

During the reception, Summers’ enthusiasm was tangible—not a single person left that night feeling overlooked. It’s the mission of the Southern Hills Arts Council (and Summers’) to “encourage folks to practice and appreciate the arts.”

The space was filled with 400 pieces of artwork made by over 120 artists hung on installation boards, complete with bright gallery-style lighting. Each bay held pieces from six categories: watercolors, 3D works, mixed media prints, pastel and drawing, oil

“ She has such a wealth of knowledge and experience that things come automatically to her. We’re learning from her.”

Kathy Miller

Southern Hills Art Council board member

and acrylics, and photography. Roughly 80 people walked about, admiring various pieces submitted from all over Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky.

Each category contained first-, second- and third-place winners, along with honorable mentions, and the festival awarded a best of show. The festival typically welcomes about 3,000 people during the exhibition’s opening weekend, exceptional turnout for a small town arts festival.

“This [festival] gives us the opportunity [to give a chance to] an emerging artist who wants to put their work on display and wants to see it in context with other established artists,” Summers says. “So we welcome kids from area schools to enter, whether it’s a high school or a college student. We certainly welcome those who come to art later on in life.”

Such is the case with Molly Markley, a senior at Jackson High School who earned an honorable mention at this year’s festival. Markley began showing at the festival when she was 9 years old (the youngest



Molly Markley of Jackson received an honorable mention for her pastel drawing "Aurora Borealis."

person to show at Foothills, her father, John Markley, says). Summers, who knew Markley was taking painting lessons at the Markay Theatre, noticed her work and invited her to show.

Paul Brown, chair of the Foothills Arts Festival and an oil painter, says Summers' encouragement was integral to his longterm involvement. "Barbara was the one who saw something in one of my works that I brought [to the festival] and liked it," Brown says. "A couple of the board members [who are] on the Southern Hills Arts Council said, 'We ought to get Paul Brown to do a one-man show.' I owe Barbara a lot for my success."

Summers' drive remains the basis for others' interest in the festival and other Southern Hills Arts Council events. After choosing to stay in Jackson, she has maintained her home stage with the care and dedication of a seasoned professional.

"She has such a wealth of knowledge and experience that things come automatically to her. We're learning from her," Kathy Miller, board member for the Southern Hills Art Council, says. "She's a wonderful director and she brings that experience from her world travels. She's been an inspiration for the last twenty years, and we would not be where we are if it weren't for her visions." 🇺🇸

More great places to go and things to do

In Appalachia, festivals are manifestations of community spirit. These counties give southeastern Ohioans a chance to celebrate well-loved aspects of local life.

Ross County Feast of the Flowering Moon

Chillicothe's Yoctangee Park hosts a three-day event every Memorial Day weekend, featuring Native American dancing, music and craft demonstrations. The Feast of the Flowering Moon refers to what the Shawnee in Ohio call the rebirth of the world, which occurs at the end of May, according to Native Americans' 13 lunar moon calendar.

Pickaway County The Circleville Pumpkin Show

Pumpkin everything. Pumpkin donuts, pumpkin pies (including a 400-pound one baked by Lindsay's Bakery), pumpkin ice cream—you name it. The 111-year-old Circleville festival is held every third Wednesday in October and runs through the following Saturday.

Athens County The Pawpaw Festival

Held every fall at Lake Snowden in Albany for the past 16 years, the Pawpaw Festival celebrates the odd tropical-like fruit that is native to the region. The biggest attraction is the festival's Beer Garden: the 2014 festival featured pawpaw ales and wheat beers from seven local breweries.



Rick Goldsberry of Chillicothe received an honorable mention for his work based on WWII keepsakes.

Vinton County Wild Turkey Festival

Downtown McArthur’s four-day festival celebrates wild turkey hunting season, which runs from April to mid-May. During the first full weekend in May, festivities include the crowning of the Wild Turkey Festival Queen, turkey-calling competitions, car shows and live entertainment.

Perry County Moonshine Festival

Held annually on Memorial Day weekend, visitors can try moonshine burgers and moonshine pie at the “Moonshine Capital of the World.” For the first time in 2014, guests can even try actual moonshine produced by the newly opened Straitsville Special Distillery.

Jackson County The Apple Festival

Initially a project created to promote the county’s apple industry, the Jackson County Apple Festival is entering its 75th year. Over the course of a week, three parades are held, along with the Apple Festival Queen contest, apple pie judging and much more.

Hocking County Nelsonville Music Festival

Nelsonville’s historic Stuart’s Opera House produces this three-day music festival, which offers much more than live bands and beer. Guests can enjoy work from local artisans, camp on-site and relax in the scenery surrounding the festival’s new location at Hocking College.

Dearlly Departed

Museum immortalizes deceased traditions

By HALLIE RAWLINSON Photos by ROYLE MAST

At the mention of the words “**mortuary museum**,” one might think of a haunted house or a horror film. But **Bill Peoples**, the owner of Marietta’s Cawley & Peoples Mortuary Museum, will tell you his livelihood is **more than a horror movie cliché**.



Bill Peoples stands in front of his 1927 Henney hearse which was featured in the major motion picture, *Get Low*.

Peoples, who also owns the Cawley & Peoples Funeral Home on the same property, is dedicated to educating others on the practices and history of mortuary science.

“My dad had the [funeral home] ten miles from here; he’s since deceased,” Peoples says. “I came back to Marietta and worked for Mr. Cawley and bought the funeral home here and bought my dad’s.”

When Peoples and his wife bought Cawley’s funeral home in 1973, they decided that they needed something that would set them apart from other funeral homes. Their “something different” came in the form of a pre-World War II hearse. But Peoples did not stop there; he began to collect everything from coffins to embalming fluids, displaying them in a spare building originally designed to be a multi-car garage.

“These are [pieces] that either [my father] had, or when I bought the funeral home here they had some bottles of things downstairs or up in the attic,” Peoples says.

As Peoples began to flesh out his collection, public knowledge of the museum spread. It seemed as if everyone had a tip for the next piece he should look at.

“I got them in different places from individuals,” Peoples says. “If you just start searching around, you can find things and people know I collect these, so people get ahold of me.”

The museum currently features five antique hearses, including a horse-drawn hearse from 1895. Most of Peoples’ hearses are Packard and Henney brand. With the exception of the horse-drawn vehicle, Peoples actually uses some of the cars for funerals today, upon request.

“But only if people want to use it and we don’t do it for show, but if they have a serious interest in antique cars and maybe their dad or granddad used to own a Packard,” Peoples says. “We still get out and use them.”

Perhaps the most excitement that any of these cars have seen started with a call from Hollywood. Peoples was contacted in 2009 by the producers of an upcoming film, *Get Low*, featuring Sissy Spacek, Bill Murray and Robert Duvall. The film’s script called for an early-20th-century hearse and Peoples was the only owner of such a rare item.

Reluctant at first, Peoples turned the producers down several times before finally allowing the filmmakers to take his 1927 hearse, which he calls “Miss Henney,” out for a spin.

“They sent me the script and they all signed it and I realized there weren’t any chase scenes or bullets or anything,” Peoples says. “Plus they used my car throughout the movie from start to finish, so I decided to go ahead and do it.”

Peoples has a section of the museum dedicated to Miss Henney’s starring role in the film, including photos of himself and his family with the stars of the film,

as well as the original script. He also plays the film in the museum for visitors to watch as they tour.

Hollywood producers are not the only ones interested in Peoples’ collection. Though Peoples does not do any traditional advertising, the museum attracts visitors of all types.

“It’s pretty varied,” Peoples says of his guests. “We’ve got a church group that’s coming through next

“It’s not scary, it’s not gruesome. You wouldn’t know that you weren’t in one of the top-class museums in the world.”

Charlotte Keim

Marietta Chamber of Commerce President and CEO

week. We’ve had Boy Scout troops, chamber of commerce people. With more tourism in Marietta, we’re seeing more people come in on buses, different groups.”

Marietta Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Charlotte Keim first experienced the museum when the chamber booked Mr. Peoples for a “Chamber After Hours” event, during which chamber members visit one local business for the evening.

“When I first heard about it, for our Chamber After Hours, I thought, ‘Well that doesn’t sound like something I’d be interested in,’” Keim says. “Going to a funeral home is not my thing so I didn’t even walk into the museum. But everyone kept walking into the museum and they were enthralled.”



An embalmer and mortician detailed each of his clients in this centuries-old book. He wrote it by hand, aside from the last entry—which detailed his own embalming.


Once Keim saw how impressed her colleagues were, she decided to give the museum a chance and was pleasantly surprised.

“There’s a first-class museum in a garage,” Keim says. “It’s not at all what you think it is. It’s not scary, it’s not gruesome. You wouldn’t know that you weren’t in one of the top-class museums in the world.”

The museum is free of charge and averages about three to four tours per week. Peoples says that visitors often expect something a bit creepier than what he has to offer. “We get some college kids and some who are into the gothic world. They don’t appreciate what I’ve got. They’re looking for more ghoulish kinds of things.

That’s not what I’m into,” Peoples says. “We don’t do that. Everything’s tasteful in here and tastefully displayed. We’re just telling them what the history of our business has been over the years.”

Apart from the National Museum of Funeral History in Houston, Texas—which Peoples says he hopes to visit—and a few small collections, Peoples’ museum is a one-of-a-kind experience. Peoples hopes that visitors who may expect the museum to be creepy will instead take away an understanding and appreciation for mortuary science.

To meet “Miss Henney” and the rest of Peoples’ collection, call (740) 373-1111. 



Hollywood’s hearse

Released in theaters: July 2010

Starring: Robert Duvall, Bill Murray and Sissy Spacek

Opening Weekend: \$88,182

Rating: 84% on Rotten Tomatoes

Director: Aaron Schneider



Left: Display of awards that were earned as Peoples traveled the eastern part of the United States showing his cars.



The 1,800-sq. ft. museum houses motorized hearses and a horse-drawn hearse, as well as embalming displays, caskets and hundreds of smaller various items such as advertising pieces, clothing and signs.

Licking's Favorite Flavor



The scoop on
Velvet's centennial

By ARIELLE J. PATTERSON
Photos by ROYLE MAST

In 1914, Joseph Dager started making ice cream in the basement of a confectionary in Utica with the hope of finding “the American dream.” He started with only three flavors: chocolate, strawberry and, of course, vanilla.

Dager emigrated from Lebanon in 1903 when he was 15 years old. After arriving in America, he worked at Ritchey's Confectionary and spoke no English. Customers liked his hand-cranked vanilla ice cream so much that he decided to share it with all of Licking County. Dager distributed his ice cream using a truck with the name “Velvet Ice Cream” on it. The truck featured what was then a modern, new coolerator that kept the ice cream refrigerated.

The second generation of Dagers continued what Joseph started. In the 1930s, his son Charles worked with other independent businesses to change city ordinances. This allowed Velvet and other companies to supply their product to cities like Columbus and other central Ohio markets. In 1937, Charles opened Velvet's first distribution center in Bucyrus. In the 1950s, Charles' sons, Joe and Mike, begin assisting in production and other parts of the business as children.

In 1960, Charles' brother Edward moved Velvet's manufacturing facility to Ye Olde Mill just a mile away from the original location. The original purpose of the mill, back in 1817, was a lumber mill. Velvet's current president Luconda Dager says the mill, which is seen on Velvet's ice cream containers, is a symbol of Velvet's old fashioned quality. In 1965, Ye Olde Mill





Ye Olde Mill is the headquarters for Velvet Ice Cream.



Velvet Ice Cream produces around 3,000 gallons of ice cream per day.


was renovated to become an ice cream destination, and in 1970 it was opened to the public.

In 1986, a fire destroyed the hard work that the Dagers put into the mill. The Dager family quickly rebuilt the local landmark and even used some of the original foundation. Today, the factory side of Velvet represents new innovations toward ice cream production, but the mill represents the same great taste and experiences the Dager family has offered for 100 years.


Today, in the fourth generation, the younger Joseph's daughters, Luconda, Joanne and Andre, are now on the executive board of Velvet Ice Cream. "In our gut, we knew that we would come back but we were never pressured to come back," Joanne Dager, vice president of food service, says. Dager says that she, along with her siblings, were encouraged to go to college and start a career in something outside of the family business.

Their father Joseph had an unwritten rule that the kids had to spend five years working somewhere else before they could work at Velvet. "It's in our blood," Vice President of Guest Relations Andre Dager says. "Dad never thought that we would come back to the business." Joanne says the same guidelines are in effect for the fifth generation of Dagers, although that has not stopped their enthusiasm. "They see the truck driving down the road and say 'I'm gonna work there some day,'" Joanne says.


Eager to teach others about the process, Velvet Ice Cream is unique because it offers guests a free tour of the factory and grounds. Velvet sees more than 150,000 visitors every year and remains open spring, summer and fall. While other "ice cream destinations" such as Ben & Jerry's and Turkey Hill charge guests for tours, Velvet does not. Marketing manager Nathan Arnold says that Velvet wants to share information to educate people about ice cream. "We call ourselves



1914
Joseph Dager begins making three flavors of ice cream in a local confectionery.



1970
Ye Olde Mill opens to the public.



1974
Velvet hosts the first Utica Ice Cream Festival.



President Luconda Dager (left) shares a scoop of Velvet's Pumpkin Pie ice cream with her sister, Vice President of Food Service Joanne Dager.

Ohio's ice cream capital," Arnold says. "Once people come here and experience Velvet Ice Cream, the tour, then they are more likely to buy it at the grocery store, because they have a personal connection to it."

Velvet has expanded far beyond a small parlor on Ohio State Route 13 now. In late March, Velvet added 500 new accounts and has extended to Kentucky markets including Louisville and Lexington. "That really couldn't have come at a better time for us," Luconda says. Velvet wants to keep expanding to other stores and food-service clients including colleges. In late October, CHAMPS Group Purchasing renewed its agreement with Velvet. Through CHAMPS, Velvet will expand to counties in Indiana, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

Each year, Velvet produces more than five million gallons of ice cream, with over 50 flavors available. The new generation of Dagers has added gluten-free flavors and a new "Velvet Churned" line. The Velvet Churned has less fat and calories but the same taste and texture as the Premium flavors. They have also added seasonal flavors such as Peppermint Stick, Peach Cobbler, and Pumpkin Pie. While nothing beats Olde Tyme Vanilla, Buckeye Classic is still a favorite for the Buckeye state.

Velvet supplies the Ohio State Fair, and instead of just choosing what flavors would be featured, Velvet held a contest on Facebook for ice cream lovers to create their own flavor. The winning flavor was

Blueberry and Sweet Corn created by a woman in Columbus. As unusual as the flavor sounds, Velvet's process for creating it was quite simple. "We softened some vanilla ice cream, we opened a can of corn, put in some blueberries, mixed it all together, and let it refreeze," Arnold says. He says the contest approach to creating new flavors is a good way to generate consumer excitement. Some of the fan flavors are still in their lineup.

Every year Velvet, in partnership with the Utica Sertoma Club, hosts the Utica Sertoma Ice Cream Festival. The festival takes place Memorial Day weekend and starts with the 1.5 mile long ice cream parade through the town. There is also a Little Miss Ice Cream pageant, and of course an ice cream eating contest. Velvet offers festival goers dozens of flavors to sample from. The festival has become a tradition for both locals and travelers. Not only is the festival a weekend of fun, but it also supports Sertoma's mission of supporting people with language, hearing and speech disorders. The Utica Sertoma Club chose an ice cream theme back in 1974 to emphasize the city's title of "Ohio's ice cream capital."


“ It's in our blood. Dad never thought that we would come back to the business.”


Andre Dager


Vice president of guest relations

While tradition is something that Velvet prides itself in, it is no longer using Great-Grandpa Joe's hand-cranking method. Today, Velvet uses a freezing tunnel that gets the ice cream down to -120 degrees and freezes the core of the ice cream in less than four hours. Although it takes a lot of hard work to produce that much ice cream, plant manager Ken Harold says all of the employees are like a big family. "It's a lot of work, but it's a lot of fun too," he says. Harold says the best part of his job is developing new flavors. "The end result always puts a smile on people's faces."

While people buy Velvet Ice Cream for its taste, forging a personal commitment to a great product is how Velvet keeps customers coming back. 🍷

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1978
Velvet starts offering tours of the factory.
- 

1987
Dager family rebuilds Ye Olde Mill.
- 

2009
Joseph C. Dager appoints his daughter Luconda Dager as president and daughters Joanne and Andre Dager as vice presidents.



Carl Knox (near left) and Vinton County varsity boys basketball coach Matt Combs record their weekly Viking Roundball Podcast in Knox's basement studio. Photo provided

The Viking Roundball Podcast

By AVERY T. JENNINGS

Carl Knox, a lifelong McArthur resident and 1986 graduate of Vinton County High School, is the host of a weekly podcast that follows the Vinton County Vikings varsity boys basketball team. The Viking Roundball Podcast began as a live-air radio show in 2003. Knox took over as the show's host in 2007, and it has since evolved into a weekly podcast with about 600 subscribers and a few hundred other unique listeners each week. McArthur's population is about 1,700, according to recent census data.

Knox discussed recording the podcast in his home-built studio with his good friend and co-host, Vinton County Vikings head basketball coach Matt Combs, and shared a couple memories from his time on the air.

Radio days

"I'm a 1991 graduate of Ohio University's school of telecommunications. I've dabbled in the radio business since I was about 17 years old, and then I got in the insurance business shortly after graduating college. Even though I've been in the insurance business for 20-plus years, I've been in and out of radio. I used to host a Saturday morning high school sports talk radio show on WKOB in Jackson. I've also done various commercials and production work."

His recording studio

"As technology advanced, my brother, who is very savvy with computers, just kind of decided one day that I could do a lot of this stuff in my own studio instead of going down to a radio station and doing a production there. It was an unfinished room in my wife and I's basement. I think we built the studio about five years ago."

How to hear the podcast

"On my brother's website, DBKmediaservices.com, there's a tab called Viking Roundball Hour, and you can subscribe to our podcast there. You can also like us on Facebook, we have a Vinton County Vikings Basketball page."

His co-host, Coach Combs

"Matt and I kind of co-host it together. In addition to being a bad basketball coach, he's the athletic director here, and, oh, by the way, he's got two young kids. So he's a pretty busy guy. That's one of the things that made it nice about transitioning out of radio into a podcast. He'll blow in and out of here in 50 minutes to an hour max."


On-air chemistry

"Matt is one of my best friends. During the summer, we are really good golf buddies. But once the season gets here, for the most part with basketball coaches, usually around November their whole mindset changes. They're busy all the time, they're nervous, they're worked up. I think most of the good coaches are like that because they're competitive people. But Matt and I know each other well enough that I'm not intimidated to bug him or crack a joke on him even when he's nervous before a game."

The show's guests

"We've had a lot of alumni who were former standout players, and it's always good to catch up with them. Also, one of my favorite guests was coach Norm Pearson, who is in the Ohio basketball hall of fame, has over 600 career wins and a state championship. A lot of these coaches I interviewed back in my radio days, so I've developed relationships with these guys over the years."

A funny moment

"A good friend who also works in radio stopped by when Coach Combs and I were recording. I came up with a bit called 'rapid fire' that was 10 questions we'd ask Coach Combs that weren't necessarily geared toward basketball. I was busy, so my friend wrote the questions. We went into recording without my first looking at the questions, so, long story short, there was some really off-color language, and Coach Combs and I were cracking up so bad we had to start over again. I rewrote the whole thing." 

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