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November 2024 • Vol. 15 - Issue 11

Sagamore Voice

60 Years of Song

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On our cover

Current singers (front l-r) Josie Brady, Ryley Wright and Anika Ernie stand with their mothers (back l-r) Marianne Brady, Lisa Wright and Allison Ernie, who are alumnae of The Singing Angels. Over the past six decades, the group has sang internationally as well as before popes and presidents. Read more about the group and some of its Sagamore members on page 4. Photo submitted.

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ScripType Publishing strives to provide a public forum within its magazines through letters to the editor and paid advertisements. Opinions, claims and endorsements expressed within those sections do not necessarily reflect those of ScripType Publishing.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Historical society restores Longwood Manor, seeks items for display

Longwood Manor was the home of Col. William Frew Long, the first mayor of the city of Macedonia. It is a Tudor-style three-story structure, located at 1634 East Aurora Rd. in Macedonia. Currently, the first floor is open for tours on the last Sunday of the month through October.

The Longwood Manor Historical Society is working to open the second floor of the manor in time for the 100th celebration of the site in 2026.

The second floor consists of the main bedroom of the colonel and his wife Isabel, a large sitting room, separate bathrooms and closets for the couple, and two guest bedrooms with adjoining bathrooms. Intentions are for the main bedroom and sitting room to be restored as such, and the guest bedrooms to be display areas for Longwood memorabilia and the like.

When the manor closed down after the passing of Col. Long, many items in the house were sold, distributed, given away or disappeared. Some of the property went to Lewis and Dorothy Tedrick, Long's farm manager and housekeeper, respectively.

If anyone still possesses items or artifacts from Longwood Manor, the Longwood Manor Historical Society would like to borrow them to make copies, take pictures or temporarily put them on display. If you have an item of interest from the manor, contact LMHS President Deb Mikulski at 440-346-9623 through call or text. ∞

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United Way collects school supplies for Akron students

United Way of Summit & Medina is collecting items for its "Stuff the Bus" school supplies drive. Requested supplies include pencils, crayons, scissors, erasers, folders, glue sticks, rulers, notebooks, calculators and more.

An estimated 39% of Summit County households and 31% of Medina County households struggle to afford Ohio's cost of living, according to a report by Ohio United Way. For families on a tight budget, school supplies can represent a significant expense, both at the start of the school year and after, when students must replenish used materials.

To purchase and ship items directly for the supply drive, visit uwsummitmedina.org/event/akron-stuff-the-bus-recharge for Summit County donations and click on the Amazon link at the bottom of the page.

To drop off donated supplies in person, visit United Way's offices at 37 N. High St., Akron, or 23 Public Square, Suite L-1, Medina, during business hours.

Donations for Akron students will be accepted through the month of October.

Items collected for Stuff the Bus will be sorted and packed by volunteers at the Akron Sort-a-Thon on Nov. 14, for distribution on the first day back from winter break. Visit the respective websites listed above to learn more and register. ∞

Next Deadline: Nov. 5

What happens to my ballot?

by Tracey Mackay, president of the League of Women Voters of Hudson

This is what happens to your ballot in Summit County when you vote in person:

Before Polls Open

All poll workers attend training prior to Election Day. The night before the election, poll workers set up and test all equipment, then disassemble and secure it. Poll workers arrive by 5:30 a.m. on Election Day. They set up and test all equipment before polls open at 6:30 a.m.

Two important notes:

- Election equipment does not use public internet. It communicates only within its own secure devices. It is not accessible outside the system.
- Everything, from the ballots to equipment, is managed and secured by two poll workers, one Republican and one Democrat.

At the Polls

Voters present the poll worker with a valid ID. Valid ID includes an unexpired Ohio Driver's license, Ohio ID card, Interim ID form issued by the Ohio BMV, U.S. Passport or card, U.S. military ID card, Ohio National Guard ID card or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ID card.

All ID must be current (not expired), have a photograph of the voter and the voter's name, which must substantially conform to the voter's name as it appears on the poll list. Digital IDs in Apple Wallet are not acceptable ID.

The poll worker checks the voter's ID with the poll list and has them identify their registered address. The registered address does not have to match the address on the Ohio ID. Voters can check their registration at ohiosos.gov.

In-person voters will receive the correct ballot for their precinct and be directed to a standing table where they will mark their answers. When voters complete their ballot, they feed it into the ClearCast (machine) to be tabulated. Note: Only regular ballots (not provisional ballots) are inserted into the ClearCast.

Once voters have been checked in and voted, they cannot vote again anywhere. If a voter has requested an absentee ballot but then votes in person, that voter is given a provisional ballot. The provisional ballot is secured separately and counted only if the absentee ballot was not received.

After Polls Close

Polls close at 7:30 p.m. Poll workers follow a very specific checklist to close the polls. They count, crosscheck and secure all the ballots and equipment. A copy of the Vote Total Report is posted at the outside entrance of the voting location to be viewed by the public.

The ballots and required voting materials and supplies are transported to the county board of elections or their assigned location by representatives of both major political parties.

The BOE continues escorting the ballots and equipment with two employees (always a Republican and a Democrat). After the deadline for mail-in ballots, the results are then audited. This is open to the public.

According to Ohio's Secretary of State, Summit County had a post-election accuracy rate for November 2023 of 99.98%.

2024 General Election dates to know

Early In-Person Voting: Begins Oct. 8 and includes the two Saturdays and the two Sundays before Election Day.

Absentee Voting by Mail: Begins Oct. 8.

Election Day: Nov. 5; Polls open 6:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m. If not returned by mail, absentee ballots must be received by your board of elections by 7:30 p.m. ∞

Levies for schools, water management on November ballot

by Laura Bednar

Two levies on the November ballot will affect Sagamore Hills residents.

Issue 30 is a 5-mill levy for the Nordonia Hills City School District. The purpose of the levy is to provide money for operations and permanent improvements. Of the 5 mills, four would go toward operating expenses and one toward permanent improvements.

Taxpayers in the school district would pay $175 for each $100,000 of county-appraised property value. The first collections would be in 2025; the Summit County Fiscal Office estimates the levy would collect $7.35 million annually.

Issue 39 is a renewal and decreases an existing levy for the North Hills Water District by .05 mills, from .5 mills to .45 mills. Taxpayers would pay $16 for each $100,000 of appraised property value. The levy would collect $310,000 annually and be in place for 10 years with first collections in 2026.

The North Hills Water District operates in Northfield Center and Sagamore Hills townships and manages water lines and fire hydrants. ∞

Trick or Treat time set

Sagamore Hills will hold its Trick or Treat on Thursday, Oct. 31, (Halloween) from 6-8 p.m. ∞

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The Singing Angels mark 60 years of making a difference

by Karen Nathan

Make music. Make friends. Make a difference. That was the mission, plain and simple, when Bill Boehm founded The Singing Angels 60 years ago.

A lifelong performer, Boehm returned home to Cleveland after World War II and became the stage director of Cleveland's Musicarnival, a theater-in-the-round located on the Thistledown Racetrack property. Musicarnival produced musicals, plays, operas, jazz and rock concerts in the summers between 1954 and 1975.

In the late 1950s, large show choirs began to take root in the United States. When Boehm founded The Singing Angels in 1964, it was one of the first. Then officially known as "Cleveland's Premiere Youth Chorus," Boehm sought to bring together youth from across Northeast Ohio.

Children from kindergarten through high school of every race, creed, religion, ethnicity and socio-economic background joined The Singing Angels, which is now known as "Cleveland's World Renowned Youth Performing Chorus."

Marianne Brady, a Sagamore Hills resident, spent 10 years as an Angel, joining in second grade and graduating in 1993. Brady's older sisters were also in the chorus.

"Mom got tired of putting her hand over my mouth while I was singing in the audience," she said. "I couldn't wait to get on stage."

The Angels exposed Brady to a literal world of opportunity. She toured with the group to U.S. military bases along the East coast. She travelled to Spain, and in Russia performed at a children's camp in Volgograd. In Poland in 1989, the chorus performed at a venue where President George H. W. Bush had spoken the previous week. The emcee introduced the Angels, saying the country recently heard from the head of the U.S., and now they were hearing from the heart.

> "We were literally a family. That's what Singing Angels is all about."
>
> **Lisa Wright, former Angel**

Brady's daughter Josie joined the Angels during the pandemic, often joining Zoom rehearsals in the car driving between volleyball and cheerleading. Now in middle school at St. Barnabas, Josie's first solo was "Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree" at a concert for the Salvation Army.

Brady is still connected to friends she met through the group, and Josie's best friends are the daughters of Angels alumnae. "We call them the Dynamic Trio," said Lisa Wright, former Angel and mom of Ryley Wright. The trio also includes Anika Ernie, daughter of Allison Ernie and granddaughter of Karen Harris, the Angels' touring manager.

Wright, who lives in Independence, joined the chorus in 1994. Like Brady, she traveled the world with the Angels. She sang at the Eiffel Tower, Disneyland Paris and in front of the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam. The friendships she formed during her time with the Angels were the most impactful.

"We were literally a family. That's what Singing Angels is all about," she said.

From the other side of town, another family began its legacy in the 1980s. Daryl Whitten was an Angel, class of 1983. He describes that time as "the best seven years of my life." Originally from Mayfield Heights, Whitten ultimately made his home in Geneva. His three children all joined the chorus and have since graduated from high school. Whitten said he travelled to England, China and Japan. During a performance in Mexico, Whitten was on stage translating Boehm's introduction from English into Spanish.

The Singing Angels have recorded records, CDs and sang on the radio. Their accomplishments include singing at the Vatican for Popes John Paul II, Benedict and Francis and singing at the White House for presidents Nixon, Ford, Carter and Reagan, according to current Executive Director Tom Deastlov.

He added that the Angels also sang with Kenny Rogers and Celine Dion. In 2022, the group represented Ohio, singing at the Centennial Celebration of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Harris has been with The Singing Angels for 38 years in various roles, presently serving as touring manager. Her children were part of the group and now her granddaughter is a member of the chorus.

In addition to travelling the world and singing for dignitaries, the show choir

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also visited nursing homes and drug rehab programs. Harris viewed this as service that was life changing for the children.

"It opened kids' worlds and minds and exposed them to things they'd never seen or known," she said.

Through the years, The Singing Angels have rehearsed in Cleveland at the YMCA, the Old Stone Church and the Fire Training Academy on Lakeside Avenue. For many years beginning in the early '90s, they called the Masonic Temple home. Now, the Angels have taken up residence in Old Brooklyn at 3600 Biddulph Ave.

The Singing Angels performed on Fox 8 News in 2021 for their annual day after Thanksgiving performance. Photo from Facebook.

The Singing Angels perform several local concerts, including a holiday concert each November and a performance in the spring. At this past spring concert, the chorus celebrated its 60th anniversary. The first chorus member, Steven Rush, sang his audition song, and as is Singing Angels tradition, alumni were invited on stage for the last numbers.

Boehm loved "Battle Hymn of the Republic" and ended concerts with it. Wright and Whitten were there to sing it with their children. Harris said there were many tears in the audience, including hers. Sadly, Bill Boehm wasn't there to see it as he died in 2017.

This year's holiday concert will be Nov. 17 at 5 p.m. at Lakewood Civic Auditorium in Lakewood.

In the '70s and '80s, the Singing Angels had upwards of 200 members. In recent years, the pandemic took its toll on membership.

The staff, parents and especially Angels persevered and the group continues with smaller membership. Alumni and staff are actively recruiting new members. The chorus now includes third- through twelfth-graders, and follows the school year calendar.

Harris welcomes interested parties to visit the group at rehearsals in Old Brooklyn on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. "We are welcoming new Angels," she said. ∞

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Trustees Corner
by Trustee Paul Schweikert

Let me start my column with a number of housekeeping items.

1. I have had a number of calls regarding police levy signs on Rt. 82 and Olde 8 Road. This is a levy for Northfield Center residents. Sagamore Hills has NO levies on the ballot this November.
2. A resident new to Sagamore Hills called and asked what we could do to settle an argument between him and his neighbor. Zoning Inspector Ray Fantozzi does not survey property lines and is not an arbitrator of disagreements between neighbors. This is a civil matter that is resolved by hiring an attorney. This has been the legal opinion of the Summit County Prosecutor.
3. Do not tamper with anyone's political yard signs during this election season. If caught, you will be charged with a misdemeanor and the fines can range between $100-$200 in the Stow Municipal Court.

Police

Sagamore Hills police, on occasion, have had to use force on individuals who are agitated and combative. Police Chief David Hayes approved officer Ryan Shelby to be trained and certified on the use of a pepper ball gun. This is a tool that may be employed to help restrain people who are totally out of control. This will be used in an event where a suspect may hurt themselves, others or a police officer.

In a perfect world, when engaged with police, a great outcome is when a suspect complies with a lawful directive and the matter is resolved on scene or at the police station. Using a pepper ball gun is a less lethal alternative than using a beanbag shot or a Taser gun. Unfortunately, when a suspect is under the influence of drugs, reasoning becomes impossible and restraint is employed.

There was a domestic violence incident where use of a pepper gun might have been useful. In early September, police went to an apartment where a boyfriend and girlfriend had a heated argument. The boyfriend ducked out the back door of the apartment when he saw police. The girlfriend had signs of redness on both sides of her face and neck. The victim explained that her boyfriend had choked her and struck her several times in the face. Patrolman Ryan Ennis located the boyfriend and he was placed under arrest. This incident occurred on a Friday.

The victim got a temporary restraining order and the boyfriend was taken to Summit County Jail. His arraignment was set for Monday. After his arraignment, he returned to Sagamore to renew the argument. Sagamore Hills Police Department was called and the boyfriend fled towards Akron to elude police. Between Sagamore and Akron, the boyfriend tried to commit suicide. This was a scenario where use of force may have been employed.

The boyfriend was successful in evading police, but was unsuccessful in harming himself. He was later caught and is now in Summit County Jail. The police were thankful they did not have to use force on the suspect. Chief Hayes encourages couples to resolve their issues without using violence.

Call if you have any questions at 330-467-4970. ∞

Township Government

Trustees appoint resident to water board

by Laura Bednar

Sept. 16 special township trustees meeting

Sagamore Hills trustees appointed resident Mike Cunningham to the North Hills water board.

The North Hills Water District is a governmental authority that owns the water mains and hydrants that deliver water from Cleveland to many residents within Sagamore and Northfield Center townships.

Seven representatives make up the board: three from Sagamore Hills, three from Northfield Center and one that pivots between the townships on a rotating basis. Members discuss water projects, fire hydrants and take action to resolve water main breaks.

Former board member Carol Lewis of Sagamore Hills vacated her seat when she was appointed to the township zoning commission earlier this year. Trustee David DePasquale said Cunningham had written a letter of interest in becoming more active in the community. He will fill Lewis' remaining term, which ends Dec. 31, 2025, and have the opportunity to reappointed for a three-year term. ∞

Ohio Issue 1....What You Need To Know...

Actual Ballot Title:

*"To create an appointed redistricting **commission not elected by or subject to removal** by the voters of the state"*

Proposed Constitutional Amendment
Proposed by Initiative Petition
To repeal Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Article XI,
Repeal sections 1, 2 and 3 of Article XIX

Actual Ballot language

The proposed amendment would:

*"Repeal constitutional protections against **gerrymandering** approved by nearly three-quarters of Ohio electors participating in the statewide elections of 2015 and 2018 and eliminate the longstanding ability of Ohio citizens to hold their representatives accountable for establishing fair state legislative and congressional districts."*

What this Means

*"**gerrymandering** is the political manipulation of electoral district boundaries with the intent to create undue advantage for a party, group, or socioeconomic class within the constituency"* WEBSTER

- Issue 1 Forces map makers to gerrymander based on race and politics
- Issue 1 Puts decision making into hands of unelected commission members
- Issue 1 Eliminates voter approved safeguards overwhelmingly passed in 2015 and 2018
- Issue 1 Removes accountability to the voters of Ohio
- Issue 1 Absolutely does not stop gerrymandering
- Issue 1 Eliminates requirements for common sense "compact" districts
- Issue 1 Eliminate Voters right to challenge Commission in the Ohio Supreme Court

"In Detroit, one year after Michigan passed similar amendments, urban Detroit voters had less representation in their General Assembly than before"

Join many of your informed fellow Citizens and VOTE NO on ISSUE 1.

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Megan Shanahan
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Vote NO
on Issue 1

A Public Service Announcement
Paid for by the
Cuyahoga Valley Republicans

Superintendent's Corner

by Casey Wright

In September, I welcomed Ron Dilley, a former business director in the Nordonia Hills City School District under Superintendent William Boliantz in the 1960s, to my office. He brought with him a piece of our district's history: a 1969 report titled "The Nordonia Hills Local School District: A Report." This document provides valuable insight into the district's history, the community's commitment to education and the challenges faced during that time.

In the 1960s, Nordonia Hills experienced rapid growth. Residential development increased school enrollment, putting pressure on the district's resources and facilities. However, the community's response was remarkable. They supported levies and bonds to fund the construction of new schools, demonstrating their dedication to providing quality education for every student.

Superintendent Boliantz's report emphasized that this dedication was not new. It dates back to the district's earliest settlers in the Western Reserve, who valued education so highly that they built schools soon after settling. Boliantz highlighted the "cooperative enterprise" of these early schools, where families contributed labor and materials to create learning spaces. This spirit of collaboration laid the foundation for Nordonia's growth in the following years.

The report also pointed to financial stewardship as a key priority. Boliantz wrote that the district must use its resources effectively to ensure maximum educational benefit. This principle is still relevant today as we navigate modern challenges like inflation and the need for updated facilities.

While reflecting on the district's past, Boliantz also called for a forward-thinking mindset. He urged that the district remain "constantly in flux – probing, changing, evaluating." His vision encouraged embracing change while maintaining the core principles of educational excellence and community engagement.

Today, these values continue to guide us. We rely on partnerships with businesses, higher education institutions, government agencies and community organizations to support our students. Our history shows the power of collective action and shared responsibility. By working together, we will continue to build a bright future for all of Nordonia Hills.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to education. Together, we are creating a future our community can be proud of. ∞

2024 in America

34% of American workers say that they are living paycheck to paycheck.
(source: Bankrate's 2024 Emergency Savings Report)

57% of US consumers rely on credit cards to make ends meet.
(source CNBC 8-6-24)

Credit card delinquency rates recently hit a 12-year high.
(Source: The Philadelphia Federal Reserve July 2024)

18 million US households experienced "food insecurity" in the last year.
- an increase of 3.2 million from the previous year.
(source: US Dept of Agriculture's most recent Household Food Security Report)

650,000+ Americans are homeless, including more than 100,000 children.
- an increase of more than 70,000 from the previous year.
(source: HUD's Annual Homeless Assessment Report for 2023)

14% of seniors now live below the poverty level - up from 10% in 2021.
(sources: The National Council on Aging and TheHill.com)

50% of Baby Boomers do not have sufficient savings for retirement.
(source: TheHill.com)

16% of millennials living with parents cite the cost of living as the reason.
(sources: Axios and the US Census Bureau)

34% of Gen Z-ers don't believe that they'll own a home in their lifetimes.
(Sources: Freddie Mac and The New York Times)

And a Family Size 20 oz. box of Cheerios costs $7.59 at Giant Eagle.
(source Giant Eagle Stores 9-26-24)

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Board adopts new policies to align with state

by Laura Bednar

Sept. 23 board of education meeting

The Nordonia Hills City Schools updated its board policies to align with recently passed state Senate Bill 168.

The policies included issues such as evaluation of administrators, board member compensation, excused student absences and CPR and AED training for school personnel.

Most notable were policies relating to religion, politics and social media. Under the new policies, students can be absent up to three days per school year for reasons of faith, religion or spiritual belief system.

Another policy prohibits the district from requiring a student or employee to ascribe to or talk about religious beliefs, affirmations, ideals or principles concerning political movements or ideologies.

Under the new social media policy, district administrators must regularly monitor Nordonia's social media platforms for violations such as threats of violence, harassment or defamation of a person and advocating or inciting lawless or disruptive action.

The policy states: "While the board's social media webpages may be interactive, they are not intended to serve as open public forums."

Administrators can remove posts that violate the rules and can ban someone from making future posts if they violate the policy multiple times.

Board members cannot use their personal social media accounts to engage in school business or speak for the board. "When board members or district employees engage in speech through personal social media accounts, they are speaking as individual citizens and not as public officials," according to the policy.

The district will allow paid commercial advertising on its website and social media pages, but the ads must be appropriate for the district audience, which includes elementary school students. Ads cannot be political or religious in nature or promote alcohol, drugs, gambling, tattoos or piercings.

Finances

Treasurer Kyle Kiffer gave an overview of district finances, starting with the August cash balance of $17.6 million, a decrease from almost $19.7 million at the same time last year. He said the decline was caused by the district's first-half property tax collection being deposited in September instead of August.

Expenditures for August were up 2% compared to last year, from $4.6 million to $4.69 million. This was due to several factors, including an increase in salaries and benefits and higher pupil transportation costs. "Purchased services are up from last year," said Kiffer. "Things are costing more." He gave examples of utility rates and special education contracts.

Open forum

During open forum, two residents spoke in favor of the school levy on the November ballot. Dawn Sedor, school parent, said the board of education brought the levy to the community at a time when it will cause the least pain financially, noting that a previous bond will fall off at the end of 2025 and another in 2030, totaling 2.86 mills between the two.

"It's easier to keep up than catch up," she said, adding that without the levy, the district will likely lose programs and be unable to attract top tier teachers with competitive salaries.

Karen Byers, parent of Nordonia alumni, said she works as a tax preparer. She noted that the Ohio tax rate has decreased by 48% between 2005 and 2023. She said Social Security benefits are not taxed by the state. Byers also said federal tax rates decreased by 12% in 2018. She suggested people speak with a tax expert and see "where maybe you actually do have more in your pocket to vote with." ∞

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Nordonia earns 4.5 out of 5 stars on state report card

by Laura Bednar

The Nordonia Hills City School District earned 4.5 stars on the state repot card, a .5 drop from its 5-star rating last year.

The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce's star-based system defines 4.5 stars as "exceeding state standards."

The state rates schools in five categories: performance on state tests; student progress; reducing learning gaps for student subgroups; measuring four- and five-year adjusted class graduation rates; and reading improvement and proficiency for students in kindergarten through third grade.

"The 4.5-star rating reflects the dedication of our educators, staff and the entire community to fostering student success," said Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development Todd Stuart. "Our focus on high academic standards, innovative teaching and robust extracurricular programs helps ensure a well-rounded education. We also prioritize strong partnerships with parents and local stakeholders, which enhances our ability to meet student needs."

The district retained its five-star rating in graduation rates, and only fell from five stars to four stars in the achievement (state tests) and gap closing (reducing learning gaps between subgroups) categories. Early literacy, measuring reading improvement in grades K-3 remained at four stars, and progress – measuring overall student growth – fell from four stars to three.

"The challenges posed by ongoing adjustments to having less tutor support have impacted overall scores," said Stuart. "Additionally, like many districts, we are navigating the effects of learning gaps from the pandemic, which continue to influence student performance in certain areas."

He attributes the high marks in graduation, early literacy and achievement to Nordonia's curriculum emphasizing foundational skills in literacy and numeracy, and using research-based teaching practices to meet student needs.

Nordonia High School offers college preparatory courses, career and technical education and advanced placement opportunities, which Stuart said contributed to the graduation rates.

At least 80% of students in each grade level from kindergarten through third grade were on track in reading. "Our success is supported by targeted interventions and small-group instruction, ensuring that struggling readers receive the support they need to catch up and excel," said Stuart.

Ledgeview Elementary, Rushwood Elementary and Nordonia High School each received two stars for progress, while Lee Eaton Intermediate, Northfield Elementary and Nordonia Middle School each earned four stars. This is a measure of students' year-over-year progress.

In addition to learning gaps resulting from the pandemic, Stuart said the two-star ratings were due to "evolving curriculum demands and requirements," which can "sometimes result in slower-than-expected growth as students and teachers adjust."

In response, Stuart said educators are focusing on targeted interventions, enhanced instructional strategies and data-driven practices to support student growth more effectively. Nordonia is also refining curriculum to align with state standards.

"With ongoing collaboration between teachers, parents and the broader community, we are confident that the district will continue to make progress and see even greater success in the future," said Stuart. "We view this slight decline as an opportunity for growth and are confident in the steps we're taking to improve outcomes in the coming year." ∞

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Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I am writing to encourage others in our community to consider voting YES for the Nordonia Hills City Schools levy this November.

This levy is imperative for student and staff safety and success. It will support funding for facility repairs and safety improvements. If this levy is not approved, we can expect to see much larger class sizes, program cuts and the district falling behind on repairs of our aging buildings.

My children went through Nordonia already, but I still feel supporting the school district is an investment in our community, homes and future residents. If we want families and young people to live and work in our community, then we have to maintain a desirable education system. We have to prioritize the future of this community and think of the next generation.

Vote YES on Nov. 5 for Nordonia levy Issue 30!

Janet Strange
Sandstone Drive

We encourage letters to the editor. Letters are limited to 250 words and must include a name, address and phone number for verification (not for publication). The name and street name will be printed. We reserve the right to edit all letters for clarity and length only. We might not use letters for space reasons or those that have appeared in other publications or letters on a single topic submitted multiple times by the same individual or group. Opinions and claims expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Scrip Type Publishing.

Coming Events

Nov. 2

CVCC craft show

Cuyahoga Valley Career Center, 8001 Brecksville Rd. in Brecksville, is hosting a craft show on Saturday, Nov. 2, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The event will feature numerous vendors offering unique gifts, handcrafted items and baked goods. Admission is $1. The craft show is the largest fundraising event for the SkillsUSA Local Chapter, a career and technical student organization.

All proceeds will support leadership activities and programming throughout the year. For more information, contact Julie Jakubczak at jjakubczak@cvccworks.edu. ∞

Nov. 10

Fair Trade Holiday Boutique

St. Basil the Great Church presents the 20th annual Fair Trade Fair and Holiday Boutique on Sunday, Nov. 10, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the church's Family Life Center, 8700 Brecksville Rd. in Brecksville.

Experience "shopping with a conscience," knowing that the artisans represented by the vendors receive a living wage and a fair price for their work, have decent working conditions and a long-term commitment from buyers that provides reasonable security for the producers.

The fair will include women's beaded necklaces, bracelets and purses from Indonesia; coiled bamboo bowls from Vietnam; Middle Eastern spices and olive oil; jewelry made from African amber; scarves and ponchos woven in Ecuador; organic 100% cotton clothing made in Cleveland; El Salvadoran purses and jewelry from recycled materials; beautiful silk scarves made from recycled saris from India and much more.

Enjoy free fair trade coffee and donuts while browsing at this free event. ∞

Nov. 16

Lions Club celebration and raffle

The Nordonia Hills Lions Club is holding its 60th anniversary celebration and annual reverse raffle on Saturday, Nov. 16, at Twinhaven Reception Hall, 10439 Ravenna Rd. in Twinsburg.

The event includes a special raffle, sideboards, buffet dinner, open bar and reverse raffle with a $2,500 grand prize. Cocktails and sideboards start at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. and raffle at 8:30 p.m.

Two meals and one reverse raffle ticket are $110. One meal and one reverse raffle ticket is $70. Extra main board tickets are $30 and absentee tickets are available for $30 if unable to attend the raffle.

For tickets or more information, call Kelly Ross at 216-408-4392, Ray Stoffl at 216-870-1074 or Tina Gruszka at 330-998-0290. ∞

Regional Events

Akron Children's Museum hosts "Hands-on Halloween" on Saturday, Oct. 26, from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Children will start their trek around the museum by designing a goody bag to fill up as they complete their Halloween Fun Guide. Groove to spooky sounds during live performances by "Mr. Jeff," and contribute to a community service project by bringing new, fuzzy socks to be donated to children at Summit County Children Services for Foster and Kinship Homes. Tickets are $12 per child, $10 per adult with a $2 discount for members and are available at akronkids.org/Halloween.

Milestones Autism Resources is hosting its "Strike It Big" bowling event on Oct. 27 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at Spins Bowl, 5619 Brecksville Rd. in Independence. The family-friendly event will feature bowling, face painting, balloon artists, costume contests, local mascots, a raffle and more. Contributions to the fundraiser will support Milestones' free autism Helpdesk, a service which allows individuals and families to contact Milestones' professional staff for personal guidance, local resources and individualized information at every stage of development. To register or donate, visit milestones.org/events/2024/10/27/strike-it-big or contact Vanetta Perry at 216-464-7600 ext. 113 or at vperry@milestones.org.

The International Women's Air & Space Museum hosts "Dinner with a Slice of History" on Nov. 1. Featuring NASA's Johnson Space Center Director Vanessa Wyche, this program will explore JSC's historic impact on human space flight and offer a glimpse of the future of space. Registration is required at iwasm.org or by calling 216-623-1111. Dinner starts at 5:30 p.m. Deadline to register is Oct. 31. ∞

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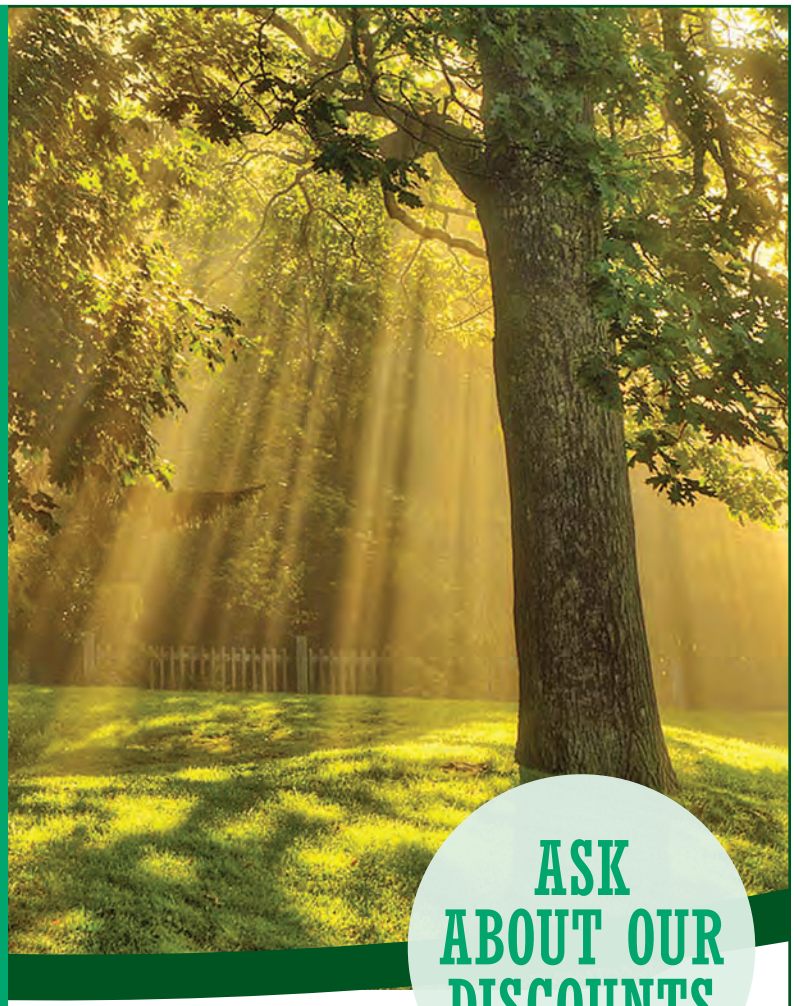

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'The Mullet' combines business and pleasure in new rental space

by Dan Holland

Taking a cue from a popular 1990s hairstyle, The Mullet, located at 500 W. Aurora Rd., Suite 140, offers, as the saying goes: "business up front, party in the back."

The 3,500-square-foot building, which houses four business offices in the front, provides a corridor to a fully-furnished 2,000-square-foot party room at the rear. The space was made available for public rentals in September.

General Manager Jon Young said people can use The Mullet for wedding showers, bachelor and bachelorette parties, birthday parties, conferences and business meetings.

The Mullet space includes a conference table and chairs, a bar, television, ping pong table and billiards table. Photos by D. Holland.

"We leave it up to the client as to the event. We offer generalized ideas of what you can host here," explained General Manager Jon Young. "We can do wedding showers, bachelor and bachelorette parties, birthday parties, conferences and business meetings."

A smaller, separate room at the far back of the building is being renovated to include a small stage in a classroom setting suitable for corporate events and training classes.

"We offer packages right now for Sunday football parties," said Young. "So, rather than going to the stadium and spending all kinds of money, we have sports packages available to invite your friends and family. We have Teresa's Pizza located right next door to order pizza and wings. With the sports packages, you get three hours for a game along with pizza, wings and drinks."

The main room includes a conference table, bar area, pool table, ping pong table, electronic dartboard, main sitting area with an electric fireplace and wall-mounted TVs.

The space provides an option for those not wanting to prepare and clean up a space in their own home, said Young, a father of two and sports coach. He has hosted youth sports teams at the location before and after games.

"This is one of those things when you don't want to host at your house and don't want to have to clean up the mess and deal with everything else. We can set everything up for you," he said. "It's a nice place to get together and have some fun and laughs and let loose in a private space."

continued on page 16

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Take This Test Before You Vote

This handy candidate Policy Checklist will help Voters make a difficult decision easier and less stressful.

	YES	NO
1. Are you better off today than 4 years ago?	____	____
2. Do you support the current Border illegal-immigrant /asylum policy?	____	____
3. Should the Government tell Big Tech who to Censor?	____	____
4. Should fracking be stopped?	____	____
5. Should transitioning Men be allowed in Girls Lockers/Restrooms/Sports?	____	____
6. Should children under the age of 18 be given sex transitioning drugs despite parental objections?	____	____
7. Are there more than 2 sexes?	____	____
8. Do you support Defunding the Police?	____	____
9. Do you support the elimination of private health insurance?	____	____
10. Should Illegal Immigrants be on Medicaid?	____	____
11. Are you OK with current prices of groceries, gas and cost of living?	____	____
12. Do you support capital gains tax on unsold assets?	____	____
13. Do you support Mandatory Vaccinations?	____	____
14. Do you support DEI, CRT policies?	____	____
15. Should books with explicit sexual content be in grade school libraries?	____	____
16. Do you support "packing" the Supreme Court?	____	____
17. Will Harris be better on Economy than Trump?	____	____
18. Will Harris be a better negotiator with Putin, Xi than Trump?	____	____
19. Do you support "Equal Outcomes" and Increased Inheritance Taxes?	____	____
20. Do you support Late Term/partial birth Abortion?	____	____

Bonus Question:

Should violence be used to keep Donald Trump out of the White House? ____ ____

If You have 10 or more "NO" answers, please cast your vote for Donald Trump.

You have decided to support and promote traditional American culture, sovereignty, protect our borders, restore our economy, fix our Health systems and protect our children.

If you have 10 or more "YES" answers, please cast your vote for Kamala Harris.

You have decided that the Constitution, American traditions and morals are outdated, and you now favor Marxist, anti-scientific culture, a departure from morality and common sense, policies that increase threat of WWIII and continue the influx of millions of illegal immigrants, a skyrocketing crime rate, a continued increase in Cost of Living, where our children can be used as pawns in a diabolical gender dysphoria experiment and its ok to censor and "eliminate" your political opponents.

Paid For By Steve Sweetnich and John Asimou and Many Friends and Fellow Citizens, Brecksville, Ohio

Mullet *continued*

Young and owner Terrence Lowis plan to open a gym – TIYT Fitness – next to the space early next year. A number of seasonal community events are currently planned for The Mullet.

"Between this space, the gym and coaching sports, we try to get involved as much as we can in the community," said Young. "In October, we're going to be doing pumpkin-carving events where you can bring your kids. We'll also be hosting sip-and-paints and a number of other fun events throughout the year."

Above all, the emphasis is on having fun, said Young. "It's a fun place to go and host all of your get-togethers," he said. "You won't find another venue like this in this area." ∞

The Sagamore Voice *will accept information on business happenings for businesses within the community. All information is subject to editing. Please email information to news@scriptype.com and label it "Sagamore Hills Business Brief."*

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The Grapevine

Congratulations to all the students who graduated and achieved high academic status.

Joe Ziegler graduated on May 11 from Ohio Wesleyan University. Ziegler earned a bachelor of arts degree, majored in biology and minored in chemistry.

Athena Kolettis and **Joe Ziegler** earned Ohio Wesleyan Dean's List recognition for spring semester 2024.

Katherine Ziegler of Sagamore Hills was named to Pennsylvania Western University Dean's List for the 2024 spring semester.

The following students have been named to the Dean's List for the spring 2024 semester at the University of Mount Union: **Katelyn Buckles, Alexis Dupont** and **Aidan McFerren.**

Leah Lammers and **Grace Renier**, both of Sagamore Hills, have been named to Miami University's spring 2024 dean's list.

Sagamore Hills native **Maria Buzogany** was named to the Miami University spring 2024 president's list.

Katelyn Buckles, of Sagamore Hills, earned a bachelors of science degree in data science and analytics/mathematics from the University of Mount Union as part of its class of 2024.

Jonathan Mitchner, of Sagamore Hills, was named to the Dean's List at Capital University for the spring 2024 semester.

In May, **Dylan Laurianti**, of Sagamore Hills, earned a master of computer science from the University of Iowa.

The following local students have been named to the Dean's List for the spring 2024 semester at Baldwin Wallace University: **Julia Dulaney,** a graduate of Nordonia High School; **Kyla Kobelak**, a graduate of Nordonia High School; **Jeremy Manson**, a graduate of Walsh Jesuit High School; **Miah Montesano,** a graduate of Nordonia High School; **Anthony Natali,** a graduate of Nordonia High School; and **Dominic Pagano,** a Trinity High School alumnus.

Email us photos of your family or friends at a Sagamore Hills event. They may be printed in the Sagamore Voice!

Email to **news@scriptype.com** *and please include names.*

The following students were named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the spring 2024 semester: Sagamore Hills native **Ben Weil** and **Cole Gabel.**

The following students graduated from Baldwin Wallace University in May: **Madison Bitikofer; Elizabeth Daniels; Miah Montesano**, a graduate of Nordonia High School; and **Ryan Taraba**, a graduate of Walsh Jesuit High School.

Sagamore Hills native **Andrea Perney** graduated with a bachelor's of science in Kinesiology and Health, majoring in nutrition, from Miami University this past May.

Robert Watson III, a Sagamore Hills native and Nordonia High School graduate, is one of two Baldwin Wallace University men's basketball student-athletes to be named to the 2023-24 National Association of Basketball Coaches Honors Court. In order to be recognized to the Honors Court, a men's basketball player must be a junior, senior or graduate student who finished the academic year with a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher.

Watson III, who earns his second career honor, carried a 3.557 grade point average in sport management. This season, he appeared in 19 games with 10 starts. Watson III scored 106 points, grabbed 62 rebounds, dished out nine assists, had a career-high 10 steals and blocked 17 shots. For his career, Watson III appeared in 73 games with 14 starts. He scored 299 points, grabbed 191 rebounds and tallied 50 blocks, 39 assists and 26 steals.

Off the court, Watson III was an Academic All-Ohio Athletic Conference honoree, dean's list student, Jacket Scholar and a member of the Chi Alpha Sigma and Lambda Pi Eta honoraries. He graduated from Baldwin Wallace in May with a bachelor of arts in sport management.

Jensen Stehlik, of Sagamore Hills, was among the 383 students named to the dean's list at Thiel College this spring.

Michael Albertini, of Sagamore Hills, has been named to the dean's list at John Carroll University for the spring 2024 semester.

Joseph LaPlaca, of Sagamore Hills, has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's summer 2024 president's list. ∞

"I left the Democrat Party in October because it had departed so dramatically from the core values that I grew up with. It had become the party of war, censorship, corruption, big pharma, big tech, big AG and big money."

Robert F. Kennedy Jr.
August 23, 2024

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Paid For By Steve Sweetnich and John Asimou and Many Friends and Fellow Citizens, Brecksville, Ohio

Nordonia Drama kicks off theater season with 'Little Shop of Horrors'

by Laura Bednar

Nordonia Drama has added a musical to its mainstage production lineup, marking the first time in school history there will be a fall musical, fall play and a spring musical.

Drama director Chris Simmons said he has wanted to produce more shows, but the pandemic slowed those plans. This year, "everything was in place logistically to support three shows," he said. Students learned of the third show at the first drama meeting of the school year, which Simmons said created pandemonium and excitement.

The fall musical is "Little Shop of Horrors," with performances Nov. 2 at 7 p.m. and Nov. 3 at 2 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The show has a cast of eight and instead of a pit band, the actors will sing along with a recorded track.

Student actors rehearse for the upcoming fall musical, "Little Shop of Horrors." Photo submitted.

"Smaller cast musicals we can't do in the spring," said Simmons, adding that because fall is marching band season, it is more difficult for student musicians to make time for the pit band.

The Broadway and Hollywood sci-fi musical focuses on meek floral assistant Seymour Krelborn, who stumbles on a new species of plant he names "Audrey II." The foul-mouthed, R&B-singing plant promises Krelborn fame and fortune as long as he keeps feeding it blood. Eventually, Krelborn discovers Audrey II's outer space origins and intent to take over the world.

Cast members are Caeden Bolling as Krelborn, Ella Bozan as Audrey and Ezekiel Rayle as Orin Scrivello. Rounding out the cast is Zion Fountain as Mr. Mushnik, Princess Okechukwu as Audrey II and Camille Laviano, Aubrey Spinetti and Mason Tyler as the Urchins.

Simmons said the musical includes some profanity and scary scenes, but because the horror is exaggerated, it comes off as funny. Tickets are available online via Hometown Ticketing and are $12 each. Tickets will also be available at the door one hour before showtime.

Audiences can look forward to the fall play "Little Women," scheduled for Dec. 6-8. The cast of 12 will perform the classic novel that focuses on Jo March and her sisters Meg, Beth and Amy. The student actors will perform playwright Kate Hamill's adaptation of the novel, which retains the major plot points but is structured as Jo's retelling of her family history for a more theatrical approach.

The spring musical, April 11-13, will be "The Addams Family: School Edition."

"I'm looking forward for the opportunity to showcase to the community how lucky I am to have the talented and dedicated students and staff to do three shows," said Simmons.

For more information on all performances, visit nordoniadrama.com. ∞

Find even more local news and events at **ScripType.com**

Your Source for Community News

Police Beat

Information provided by the Sagamore Hills Police Department

Sept. 2 – Officers responded to Springwood Road and Natalie Boulevard for report of an elderly female walking alone and confused. She was taken home and her son said she had a history of memory issues.

Sept. 2 – A Brandywine Road resident had an allergic reaction to an infusion for a medical condition. Macedonia EMS performed CPR and the man was transported to the hospital. He later died at the hospital due to natural causes.

Sept. 5 – Police responded to a Dunham Road residence for a dispute between a husband and wife. The wife went to her daughter's house to be separated for the day.

Sept. 5 – A resident reported a male at a W. Aurora Road store showed her an inappropriate photo on his phone.

Sept. 5 – Police responded to a North Gannett home for report of a domestic dispute between a father and son. The son was taken to the hospital for an evaluation.

Sept. 7 – Police were dispatched to a Fleetwood Drive residence for report of a possible domestic violence incident. A male was arrested for being physically aggressive with his female partner.

Sept. 8 – Officers were dispatched to a Greenwood Parkway residence for a neighbor dispute. Two females involved verbally insulted each other.

Sept. 9 – A male at a Fleetwood Drive residence was in violation of a protection order. The male had entered his girlfriend's home without consent, followed her to the park and later made suicidal statements. He was taken to the hospital and a warrant was out for his arrest.

Sept. 10 – A boyfriend and girlfriend had a domestic dispute at a Deerfield Drive residence. Both parties were believed to be intoxicated.

Sept. 11 – Police responded to a silent panic alarm at a W. Aurora Road grocery store. A suspicious male was asked not to return to the store or he would be arrested for trespassing.

Sept. 11 – A female at a W. Aurora Road apartment reported being a victim of domestic violence by her husband.

Sept. 17 – Police responded to a car crash at Dunham and Houghton roads. The female driver was arrested for OVI.

Sept. 17 – A domestic dispute between a brother and sister took place on Rockefeller Lane. The brother had a recent history of mental health issues and was taken to the hospital for an evaluation.

Sept. 17 – Police responded to a Millrace Lane residence for a 22-year-old male who was having a seizure and may have overdosed. The Macedonia paramedics took him to the hospital.

Sept. 20 – While doing business checks in the early morning, police saw a male standing in the parking lot in the dark. He said he had been drinking and was given a courtesy ride home.

Sept. 21 – Officers observed a suspicious vehicle at Brandywine Falls. A male and female that matched on an online dating site were in the car and the female was 15 years old. Her mother came and took custody of her. ∞

From the Experts

Rethinking with ReWorks – Recycling Options

by Marcie E. Kress, Executive Director, ReWorks

Marcie E. Kress, Executive Director, ReWorks

Recycling is a great way to help reduce the amount of material sent to landfills. This doesn't just have a positive effect on the environment, but also the economy. Strong recycling programs can help create jobs, reduce waste management costs and can even generate revenue.

To increase the positive impacts of curbside recycling it is important to keep the stream of recyclables placed in your home recycling carts free of contamination. By preparing your items properly you are ensuring a clean stream of material. To do this we have some simple reminders.

All items placed in your home recycling cart should be **clean, dry and not bagged.**

- **Clean:** Items that have previously contained food or beverages are empty and not coated in residue. This helps keep contamination off other items placed in your cart.
- **Dry:** Ensure there are no liquids remaining in or on items placed in your home recycling cart. This allows other items like paper and cardboard placed in your cart to remain dry and eliminates the likelihood of them sticking to other materials.
- **Not bagged:** Do not bag your recyclables. Bagged items cannot be identified and sorted properly at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs.) Additionally, plastic bags that get into the recycling stream can cause issues for MRF machinery.

Recycling options don't end with your home recycling cart. Listed below are a few materials that should never be placed in home recycling carts but can be recycled in another way.

- **Plastic bags and film plastic:** Take items like bags and wrappers on paper towels to participating grocery stores and big box stores.
- **Shredded paper:** Shredded paper can be recycled when it is taken directly to a facility that processes paper fiber. Visit our webpage www.summitreworks.com/shredding for options.
- **Batteries:** Batteries should never be placed in your home recycling cart. Visit www.summitreworks.com/batteries for handling options.
- **Scrap metal:** Items like foil, metal car parts, string lights and other metal items can be recycled at scrap metal recycling facilities. Contact the facility for hours, locations, and other specifics before you bring materials to them.

Recycling makes an impact – especially when done properly. Knowing the best option for recycling your material helps keep recycling efficient and limits contamination.

For more recycling guidance visit www.summitreworks.com/recycling

ReWorks, the solid waste management authority for all Summit County, provides programs, services, and community outreach on waste reduction, recycling, and other materials management strategies. For more information, visit www.summitreworks.com or call 330-374-0383. Email us at: talk@summitreworks.com.

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Estate Planning for Pets

by Dan A. Baron, Baron Law LLC

Nobody wants to think about losing their pet, but have you thought about what will happen to your pet if they lose you? Creating a pet trust clause as part of your comprehensive estate plan will ensure that your furry friends are left in the right hands and taken care of to your exacting standards even after you pass.

A pet trust is a legal document, often found within the articles of a general family trust, that establishes care guidelines for your pets if you become incapacitated or pass away. A trustee is then appointed to manage the funds, while a caregiver is designated to take care of the pet; these may or may not be the same person in any given case. You can include a pet trust clause in any kind of trust, revocable or irrevocable. In most cases, a typical family will create a revocable family trust protecting assets for their children while also avoiding probate court. The revocable family trust would also include pet trust language caring for all furry friends.

One of the most significant advantages of a pet trust is that it is legally enforceable. This means that the pet owner's instructions for their pet's care must be carried out, ensuring that the pet receives the treatment and attention they are accustomed to. Unlike informal agreements with friends or family, a pet trust guarantees the terms will be honored. Conversely, this clause would not be upheld in a simple will. Remember that a simple last will is administered in probate court which is time consuming and expensive.

Pet owners can be as detailed as they wish when setting up the trust, specifying things like food preferences, grooming routines, frequency of veterinary visits and which vets to see. However, most pet trust creators leave a great deal of flexibility and general instructions for their trusted caregiver. You can set aside funds within the trust that are to only be used for the pet's care and support, or use a guideline for your trustee to make the decision of how much is to be set aside when the time comes.

Your named trustee is responsible for managing the funds placed in the trust, so make sure this is a person you know will respect your wishes and exercise fiscal responsibility. The caregiver, on the other hand, is the person who will physically care for the pet. It's essential to select someone who knows and loves the pet, understands their needs, and is willing to accept the responsibility of caring for the animal over the long term. The trustee and caregiver can be the same person. Some pet owners opt to assign these roles to separate individuals to ensure checks and balances. This separation can help avoid conflicts of interest and ensure that the pet receives the best possible care, but it is not required.

Bubba

Setting up a pet trust requires careful planning and documentation. When creating the trust, pet owners need to provide detailed information to ensure everything is covered. This includes:

1. **Identification of the pet:** It is important to name your currently living pet and also include provisions that would encompass any additional animals you may take in throughout your lifetime.
2. **Pet's care requirements:** Detailed instructions regarding the pet's daily care, including food preferences, grooming, and veterinary care, should be specified, if any.
3. **Funds:** Determine the amount of money necessary to care for the pet throughout its lifetime. This includes routine expenses like food and medical care, as well as unforeseen costs, such as emergency veterinary treatment. We typically recommend setting a specific amount instead of an annual allowance or percentage-based payment.
4. **Trustee and caregiver:** Appoint a trustee and caregiver, as well as successors for both roles, in case the original appointees are unable to serve.
5. **Final arrangements:** Specify burial or cremation instructions for the pet, should they pass away.

It is essential to have a backup plan in case the chosen caregiver is no longer able to fulfill their role. Situations change, and someone who initially agreed to take on the responsibility may no longer be able to do so due to personal circumstances. It's important to regularly communicate with both emergency and permanent caregivers to ensure they remain willing and able to care for the pet if needed.

While it might seem tempting to designate an organization, such as an animal welfare group, as a permanent caregiver, this is generally not advisable. These organizations, while well-meaning, typically lack the resources to provide long-term care for individual pets. Instead, focus on finding someone who can offer your pet a home and the attention they need.

A pet trust is an excellent way to ensure the continued care of your beloved animals after you're gone or unable to care for them. By setting up a trust, pet owners can provide for their pet's wellbeing, from daily routines to medical care, and ensure that their companion animals live comfortably and happily for the remainder of their lives. As you establish your estate plan, remember to talk to your attorney about these options and how you can best ensure your pet's comfort in your absence.

For more information on how to create a revocable family trust with pet trust language, contact our office today at 216-573-3723 or dan@baronlawcleveland.com. Pictured in this article is Bubba, the mascot of Baron Law LLC and companion for attorney Dan A. Baron.

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Prepare for the Cold Now

by Tom Olecki, Owner, Broadview Heating

Every year we are faced with the inevitable task of preparing for the coming winter weather season. Cooler weather is showing its face and we have begun calling on our heating systems to go back to work for us. The change of seasons requires us to prepare our heating systems for the long cold winter ahead and although I have written on this topic every fall, these checks need to be completed before you click the thermostat to heat.

If you think you are done using the air conditioner, it is a good idea to turn off its breaker or fuse. If you don't, the small amount of heat generated in the air conditioner when it's off makes a perfect home for mice in the winter. Should they nest in the a/c unit they can do quite a bit of damage to the wiring or insulation. Also, now is a good time to install the cover on the A/C. Remember, do not wrap it in plastic. Use a quality custom cover that breathes or even just a piece of plywood on top to help keep out the snow and leaves.

Change the filter in the furnace if it is a throw-away style. If it is a washable style, simply hose it off or use a mild detergent if it has greasy dust.

If you have a humidifier, some styles have a damper in them that should be reset to the winter position. A humidifier also requires cleaning once a year and replacement of its pad or waterpanel. If it has a manual humidity control, turn it on and set it for 35 percent humidity.

Make sure the area around the furnace is uncongested and nothing is leaning against the furnace or restricting airflow to it.

If you have an electronic or programmable thermostat, change its batteries – and don't forget the batteries in the smoke or CO detector.

If your furnace has plastic exhaust pipes that exit through the side of the house, make sure they are clear of vegetation and that wasps have not built a nest in them over the summer.

It is highly recommended you have your system professionally serviced at least once per year. This allows the furnace to run at peak efficiency and will ensure it is operating safely. It doesn't matter when it is inspected, just have it done once a year.

Lastly, go ahead and turn the furnace on now to make sure it works before you really need it.

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Questions are always welcome. For free help with your heating/cooling system, ask Tom@broadviewheating.com or call 440-526-7310.

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Tax-Aware Investing in Practice

by Kevin Kroskey, CFP®, MBA

Tax-aware investing means you can have your cake and eat it too. As I set out in the previous two articles, using a combination of long and short positions in your portfolio lets you pursue positive returns while lowering your tax bill. Below are two common situations where tax-aware investing can really make a difference.

The Big Sale

Suppose you are realizing a substantial gain, whether owing to the sale of your business or perhaps by diversifying a large amount of highly-appreciated stock you have accumulated over time (e.g. as a company executive).

As we know, it's possible to use losses in your portfolio to offset your investing gains. But in the case of a substantial gain, how are you going to find a loss big enough while still coming out ahead overall? The answer is simple: you plan ahead.

Preparing the Way

Suppose you establish a long-short portfolio, going long on a basket of stocks you think will do well and shorting another basket you think will underperform. Let's call this Step 1. If you make the right choices, you will experience a net positive performance over time. However, in any given year at least some of the short positions will generate losses.

For example, suppose $1m invested generates a 10% or $100k net gain. This consists of $400k in unrealized gains and $300k in realized losses. The result would be a $300k net capital loss for the tax year and a deferral of the $400k gain.

Losses can be carried forward to future tax years. After five years with the strategy, you can accumulate net losses of over $1.5m. These losses could now offset a large gain of $1.5m when you sell your business or sell highly appreciated shares.

The earlier you start, the more sizeable tax shield you can build. Also, if you have larger dollars to invest or add leverage to the long/short strategy, net capital losses can be even greater.

Can you hear the sound of champagne corks popping at the IRS? That's right – me neither.

Income Taxes Too?

As we also mentioned in the initial article, tax-aware investing extends beyond your portfolio to what in tax terms is referred to as 'ordinary income' – business income or non-business income (wages, interest, IRA/401k distributions, etc.).

Let's go back to the example of the married doctor couple in the first article. Suppose that their combined wage income is $1m. Let's also assume they have ownership in a medical practice that generates an additional $500k in business income.

How can your investment losses be used to offset income outside the portfolio? Doing so first requires Step 1 with net capital losses being realized as previously described. In addition, Step 2 of the tax-aware strategy must be added, bifurcating tax attributes into either business income (ordinary income) or capital gains.

If properly structured and managed, the result of Step 1 and 2 can yield near-zero net capital gains/losses in a tax year but substantial business losses to offset ordinary income. Business losses first offset other business income and then non-business income up to a certain amount – $610k in 2024.

What does this mean for our couple? Well, if the couple's Step 2 strategy resulted in business losses of $700k for 2024, here's how it shakes out. They use the $700k as an offset first against their $500k of business income. Then the remaining $200k excess business loss is an offset to their wage income. Altogether, a $700k reduction saves $259k in federal taxes at their 37% rate!

How can this be possible? The keys are the long/short investing strategy, which is used in both steps. Then Step 2 utilizes a partnership structure that makes a tax election to be taxed as a 'trader' rather than an 'investor.' And rather than using stocks as in Step 1, the general partner executes the strategy utilizing swaps. Swaps can be structured with a large bank to have the same underlying economics as owning stocks outright but per regulations have different tax attributes.

These strategies and regulations they rely upon are complex and require a unique combination of deep expertise in investing, planning, and tax strategy, which is uncommon even in the professional space.

The long and short of it is, it may be time for a 2nd opinion and explore how these long-short, tax-aware investing strategies and their potentially substantial benefits may apply to you.

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November Plants of the Month: spring bulbs

Submitted by the Bath Gamma Garden Club

As we put our gardens to bed for winter, we should also be preparing for the arrival of spring by planting spring blooming bulbs. When bees awaken from winter hibernation they are literally starving and need protein rich nectar from spring flowers. Below are examples of early spring blooming bulbs that serve as pollinators.

Eranthis hyemalis, commonly called winter aconite, is one of the earliest to bloom. The bright yellow buttercup flowers emerge through the snow in late February to early March. They support bees and hoverflies. Winter aconite prefers alkaline soil and woodland habitats with consistent moist, well-drained soil high in organic matter. Growth is most vigorous in locations that receive at least five to six hours of direct sunlight.

They grow to a height of 6 inches. Plant them in the fall 4 inches apart and 2 to 3 inches deep. No need to fertilize, just add organic matter. They quietly disappear like other spring ephemerals until next season. They will colonize and spread through the years.

Winter aconite. Photo submitted.

Galanthus nivalis, commonly referred to as snowdrops, bloom in late February and early March, often emerging when snow blankets the ground. The genus name refers to the white flowers (gala is Greek for "milk," anthos is Greek for "flower"), and nivalis is Latin for "snow-covered."

Snowdrops are tiny plants (3 to 6 inches tall) that produce one small, white, bell-shaped flower, which hangs off the end of a green, leafless stalk like a "drop" prior to opening. When the bloom opens, three outer petals arch out over three inner petals. The flower "nods its head" down to the ground.

They prefer loose, well-drained soil, with plenty of humus. Plant 3 inches deep and space 3 to 4 inches apart and use bulb food when planting. They enjoy full sun and are suited to rock gardens, woodland gardens or under deciduous trees. Let the foliage die back after flowering to enable the bulb to replenish nutrients for the following years' blooms.

There are over 80 different species of **crocus** available, which are bulbs that usually appear in March in Northeast Ohio. Crocuses are members of the iris family. They all have deep yellow or orange powdery pistils full of pollen, attracting bees and other pollinators with their fragrance. They produce cup-like blooms that close at night.

Snow crocuses are usually the first to bloom, featuring bicolored petals like white or cream and purple with bright yellow centers. Dutch crocuses are the giants of the crocus world, even at only 2 to 4 inches tall, and feature assorted colors.

Crocuses are technically corm like gladiolas. Plant them in fall at a depth of 4 inches and 2 to 4 inches apart and supplement with bulb food or bone meal. Plant several varieties in clusters for mass appeal and lasting bloom. They like neutral, well-drained soil and prefer full sun. Deer usually do not like crocus, but rodents like squirrels, chipmunks and mice consider crocuses a tasty snack. Granular products like "Repels All" will help deter the rodents. Like all bulbs and corms, let foliage die back to replenish the nutrients for future blooms to form.

November is a wonderful time to plant these early blooming bulbs and corms. The ground is usually moist, and the sunny days and cooler temperatures help them establish quickly. You will be rewarded with a spring show of colors and the bees will be forever grateful. ∞

ORGANIZATIONS

Cuyahoga Valley Genealogy Society

The Cuyahoga Valley Genealogical Society will hold its monthly meeting on Monday, Nov. 4, at 7 p.m. in the Willow Room of the Independence Civic Center, 6363 Selig Blvd. in Independence. Members and interested public are invited to attend.

The meeting topic will be "DAR: Yesterday and Today" presented by Cynthia Kettler, who has been a member of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution since 2008. As a member of the Hannah Luther Bosworth Chapter in Strongsville, she has held the offices of regent, vice regent, registrar, historian and treasurer.

At the state level, Kettler is currently serving as northeast district director. At the national level, Cindy has served as division vice-chair for the East Central Division for the America 250! and membership committees.

Other lineage society memberships include Daughters of the American Colonists, Colonial Dames of America, General Society of Mayflower Descendants, Continental Society Daughters of the Indian Wars and the Jamestowne Society.

Coffee and refreshments will be served. For additional information, contact Cuyahogavalleygensociety@gmail.com. ∞

Nordonia Hills Garden Club

All gardeners and aspiring gardeners are invited to Nordonia Hills Garden Club meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. on the ground floor of the Macedonia City Center, 1484 East Aurora Rd.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 20, and the featured speaker will be Matt Valencic. His topic will be "Raptors of Northeast Ohio," which includes hawks, owls, eagles and falcons, among others.

Those interested in club membership can visit nordoniahillsgardenclub.com. ∞

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Remember to "fall back" one hour on November 3, 2024.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Sagamore Hills Police Department offers child safety seat installations/inspections available free of charge by appointment only. Appointments can be made by sending an email with the year/make/model of their vehicle and car seat along with the age of the child to certified technicians Robert Patterson rpatterson@mysagamorehills.com and Glenn Lucore glucore@mysagamorehills.com. Officers Patterson and Lucore will respond via email and set up a time to have the car seat installed during their normally scheduled shifts. Residents may also have their seat installed every Tuesday or Thursday from 2 to 5 p.m. at Ahuja Medical Center in Beachwood by calling 216-844-2277 or contact the Macedonia Fire Department non-emergency number 330-468-1234 to make an appointment.

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If interested in this program visit our website www.mysagamorehills.com and click on Township Services then Senior Call Program to complete and submit the enrollment form.

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