

Community Matters

*A Voice of, by, and for the
People
of Delaware, Ohio*

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Send info, articles, or comments to
delawarecommunitymatters@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

"Safety Town" for Kids at SWCI (8/1-4)

The Delaware Police Dept. and the Second Ward Community Initiative (SWCI) are inviting children entering kindergarten or first grade this fall to an interactive program that focuses on safety issues such as pedestrian safety, bike safety, traffic safety, fire safety, animal safety, stranger awareness, proper use of 911 calls, poisons, and more. There will be different activities each day. The program will be held Aug. 1-4 (9-11:30 am) at SWCI, 50-A Ross St. Kids and one accompanying parent / guardian can then stay and participate in the free summer-lunch program (12-1 pm). Registration forms for "Safety Town" are available at SWCI.

Genealogical Society Lecture on WW I (8/1)

The Delaware County Genealogical Society has invited Susan Talbot-Stanaway to discuss "World War I on the Ohio Home Front: Your Country Calls" on Tues., Aug. 1 (7:30 pm) in the Community Room of the Main Library (84 E. Winter St.). The American involvement in WW I from 1917-18 brought about much domestic change. For example, women suddenly began to play a much larger role in agriculture and industry. The program is free & open to the public.

Bee Workshop at Stratford (8/3) – \$

Bee expert Olivia Carril will hold day-long workshops at multiple locations in Ohio in August of 2017. On Thurs., Aug. 3 (9 am – 4 pm), she will be at Stratford Ecological Center at 3083 Liberty Rd. to discuss "Bees in Your Backyard." The day-long workshop focuses on native bees and their identification. She will also provide tips on how to attract these pollinators to your backyard. The cost of \$65 per person includes materials, refreshments, and lunch. For an additional \$15 (\$80 total), you may purchase Carril's field guide, "The Bees in Your Backyard." Visit www.stratfordecologicalcenter.org for more info and to register. – Stratford is open to the public Mon. – Fri., 9 am – 5 pm and Sat., 9 am – 1 pm. It is closed Sun. & holidays.

Ashley Corn Show (8/3-5)

The Ashley Corn Show is a traditional family-friendly event for all ages. This year's show will be held from Thurs. to Sat., Aug. 3-5, from 5-11 pm. The location is 102 E. Main St. in Ashley, situated in the northeastern tip of Delaware County on State Rt. 42. Presented by the American Legion Post 518, the show features lots of food, live bands, carnival rides, antique tractors, a kiddie-tractor pull, a mobile blood drive, and more. Admission is free. Funds raised are used to support local youth activities. – The Ashley Corn Show dates back to the 1930s and attracts hundreds of people every year.

Ohio Sales Tax Holiday (8/4-6)

The 2017 Ohio Sales Tax Holiday begins Fri., Aug. 4, at 12 am and ends Sun., Aug. 6, at 11:59 pm. The following items will be tax-exempt during those three days: 1. clothing priced at \$75 or less per item; 2. school instructional materials priced at \$20 or less per item; and 3. school supplies priced at \$20 or less per item. For a list of FAQs, google Ohio Sales Tax Holiday.

First Friday: "Picnic with the Cops" (8/4)

Main Street Delaware's August First Friday celebration features "Picnic with the Cops" (Aug. 4, 6-9 pm). It includes a cop car cruise-in, a children's police academy training camp, an obstacle course, games, free hot dogs & freeze pops, and more for all to enjoy. Lighthouse Youth Center of William Street UMC is sponsoring the teen area. Since July's "Chalk It Up" has to be canceled due to inclement weather, it will be repeated Aug. 4 and run parallel with "Picnic with the Cops." For rules or to learn more about Main Street Delaware, visit www.mainstreetdelaware.com.

Boomerang Festival (8/5)

The 38th Annual Free-Throwers Tournament will be held Sat., Aug. 5, 2017, in Delaware. Details were not yet available at press time, but in 2016 the tournament took place in Smith Park on Troy Rd. north of Delaware. The morning will start off with Trick Catch & Fast Catch for experienced competitors. Spectators are welcome. Following the opening events will be Beginning Competition for anyone wanting to play. Instruction is available. Accuracy & catching competitions with prizes will follow and are open to novices. Following lunch, there will be hard-core competitions (MTA 100, Aussie Round, Endurance), combined with H2H Trick Catch & Fast Catch. For updates, check the U.S. Boomerang Association, Leading Edge Boomerangs, and related sites.



Sunday Funday with Your Pup (8/6) – \$

Bark Columbus and Mutt's Paradise are celebrating a "Sunday Funday with Your Pup" event on Sun., Aug. 6, starting at 5 pm. The event will be held at Mutt's Paradise Pet Training at 1277 Hills-Miller Rd., the site of the former 7-acre Bark-Til-Dark dog park. It includes a cook-out, doggy reiki, and a bounce house. At 9 pm, the movie "Secret Life of Pets" will be screened, along with free popcorn. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children under 12. Dogs are free, but must have all their shots.

Sustainable Delaware Ohio (8/12)

Sustainable Delaware Ohio (SDO) is a local grass-roots movement dedicated to economic, social, and environmental sustainability. Now in its 7th year, the group meets on the 2nd Sat. of each month (9:30-11 am) at the Public Library at 84 E. Winter St. The meetings are open to the public, but only members are eligible to vote. The fall meetings are 8/12, 9/9, 10/14, 11/11, and 12/9. For more info, visit www.sustainabledelawareohio.org.

Dave Staley Triathlon (8/13) – \$

The 37th annual Dave Staley Adult & Youth Triathlon will be held Sun., Aug. 13. Adults start at 8 am, youth at 9:15 and 10:15 am. The venue is once again Delaware's Mingo Park at 500 E. Lincoln Ave. Everyone is invited. The triathlon is intended to be a fun and non-competitive event for all individuals, regardless of fitness, skill, and experience level. Adults (13 years or older) swim 500 meters, ride their

bicycles for 13 miles, and run 3.1 miles. There are different requirements for youth ages 6-8, 9-10, and 11-12. The event is co-sponsored by the YMCA and the City of Delaware. Early registration is \$35 for adults (\$25 youth) and increases to \$45 for adults after Aug. 5 (youth \$35).

An Equine Jubilee (8/14-10/14)

"An Equine Jubilee: Celebrating the Horse in Art" will be shown at the Arts Castle (190 W. Winter St.) from Aug. 14 through Oct. 14. Viewing hours are Mon. – Fri., 9 am – 5 pm. The show is free & open to the public. A reception for the participating artists is planned for Sept. 10 (5-7 pm). – If you love horses, Gallery 22 at 22 E. Winter St. is also opening an exhibit soon. "Equine in the Natural World: The Art of Susie Gordon" will be shown Sept. 1 – Oct. 24. The horse parade is on Sept. 10. The Delaware County Fair runs Sept. 16-23.

Delaware City Schools Start (6/16)

Delaware City Schools start Wed., Aug. 16. A list of required school supplies is available on their website.

Marty Kalb Retrospective Opens (8/17)

Retired OWU art professor Marty Kalb has had a distinguished 50-year career as an accomplished artist and teacher. From Aug. 17 to Oct. 8, visitors have the opportunity to see a comprehensive retrospective of his oeuvre in OWU's Ross Art Museum at 60 S. Sandusky St. The exhibit is free & open to the public. Kalb's early work has been described as having "a strong representational figural element with an experimental abstract expressionist background." His later work includes powerful images inspired by the Holocaust, combining his figurative and historical interests. To learn more about the upcoming exhibit and about the artist, visit www.owu.edu/ross and/or www.martykalb.com.

Delaware County Democratic Party (8/17)

The Central Committee of the Delaware County Democratic Party meets on the third Thursday of each month at its business office at 12½ N. Sandusky St. The meetings are open to all. Typically, they begin with a brief business meeting, followed by a speaker and then updates from the various committee chairpersons. The next meeting is Thurs., Aug. 17 (7:30 pm). To find out more, visit their website and/or Facebook page.

Kilbourne Festival (8/19)

Kilbourne's annual festival is scheduled for Sat., Aug. 19. Breakfast will be served at 8 am, and a parade will be held at 11 am. Afternoon events (12-3 pm) include a farmers & flea market, arts & crafts, entertainment, cornhole & horseshoe tournaments, other games, Boy Scout demos, and more. Parking & admission are free.

Grove City "EcoFest" (8/19)

The annual Grove City "EcoFest" is scheduled for Sat., Aug. 19 (10 am – 4 pm). The family-friendly event will be held at the Grove City Town Center (Park St. at Arbutus Ave., east of Broadway). Come & enjoy demonstrations, get to know green businesses, learn about natural-living products and alternative energy, take a ride in an electric car, and much more. For details, visit ecofest.grovecityohio.gov.

Benefit in the Barn (8/19) – \$

According to the Delaware County Hunger Alliance, there are 16,440 food-insecure people in the county, 17% of them children under the age of 18. Last year, the annual Benefit in the Barn raised the amount of \$31,000 to fight hunger in Delaware County. The 2017 Benefit in the Barn event will take place Sat., Aug. 19, at the Doug Dawson farm at 2931 Bowtown Rd. east of Delaware. Tickets are \$30 (\$25 for Farm Bureau members) and include dinner at 6 pm and a concert by the Central Ohio Symphony that starts at 7:30 pm. IDs are required for alcoholic beverages at the cash bar. There are tents and picnic tables on site, but participants are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs for casual outdoor seating.

Solar Eclipse (8/21)

A total solar eclipse will be visible in the U.S. on Mon. afternoon, Aug. 21 (1-4 pm local time). In Central Ohio, however, only

88-90% of the sun will be blacked out by the moon at the height of the eclipse at around 2:30 pm.

OWU Starts (8/23)

The academic year of Ohio Wesleyan University starts Wed., Aug. 23. OWU is celebrating its 175th anniversary this fall, and there will be plenty of festivities in conjunction with Homecoming weekend (Oct. 20-22).



Zucchini Festival in Obetz (8/24-27)

The annual Obetz Zucchini Festival runs Aug. 24-27. It is held at a new location this year – Fortress Obetz, 1841 Williams Rd., the former Columbus Motor Speedway site. Among this year's highlights are 2 concerts, by country singer Jamey Johnson (8/25, 9 pm) and by guitar-rocker Ted Nugent (8/26, 8:30 pm). Other features include rides, food, pageants, a cruise-in & motorcycle show, a parade, a beer garden, and – of course – zucchini judging. Admission to the festival & concerts is free, but please note that no coolers or outside food & beverages are permitted. For more info and directions, visit www.obetz-zucchini-fest.com.

Annual Delaware Classic Auto Show (8/26)

The 24th Annual Delaware Classic Auto Show, formerly known as "Blast from the Past," will be held Sat., Aug. 26. Cruise in is Fri., Aug. 25. Registration is Sat. from 7-11 am. Judging takes place from 12-2 pm, with awards announced starting at 3 pm. In addition, there will be food, crafts, prizes, a raffle, door prizes, and more. Visit www.performanceclassiccarshow.com for more info.

Galena Summerfest (8/26)

The 8th Annual Galena Summerfest will take place at the Galena Village Square on Sat., Aug. 26 (11 am – 11 pm). This is a full day of food and fun to cap off the summer. Admission & parking are free. There is a kids zone, pony rides, a beer garden (IDs required!), fabulous food, wagon tours through the historic village (at 1, 3, 5 & 7 pm), and live music throughout the day & evening. Visit www.galenasummerfest.com for more info.

Green Drinks (8/30)

The Delaware chapter of the national and international organization movement "Green Drinks" meets on the last Wed. of each month at the Old Bag of Nails (66 N. Sandusky St.) at 7 pm. There is no formal agenda. The idea is to meet casually and to discuss "green" topics of local interest such as bike trails, solar panels, recycling, or environmental health. Anyone is welcome to join the conversation. The fall meetings are 8/30, 9/27, 10/25, and 11/29.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

First Friday Pet Walk (9/1)

First Friday in Sept. will feature a "Pet Walk" as well as a hands-on display of Public Works equipment. Registration for the dog walk is \$10 and limited to 100 participants.

Citizen Police Academy (9/5 – 11/14)

The next Citizen Police Academy will run from Sept. 5 through Nov. 14. Classes will be held Tues. nights from 6:30 -9 pm at the Delaware Police Dept. at 70 N. Union St. Participants must be at least 16 years old, pass a background check, and be able to attend at least 9 of the 11 meetings. Persons with "a criminal history" may be denied acceptance, according to the brochure. There will be one Sat. morning session on Oct. 7 (9-11:30 am). Participation is free. To register, contact Robert Hatcher at the Delaware Police Dept.

SWCI Community Unity Festival (9/9)

The annual fall festival of the Second Ward Community Initiative (SWCI) will be held Sat., Sept. 9 (10 am – 6 pm), at the SWCI Center on the corner of S. Liberty St. and Ross St. The event is free & open to the public.

All-Horse Parade (9/10)

The 2017 All-Horse Parade will be held Sun., Sept. 10 (3 pm). It starts and ends at the Delaware County Fairgrounds.

OWU: "Global Health Challenges" (9/12)

The 2017 Sagan National Colloquium kicks off with a lecture by health-care expert Anton Gunn on "Global Health Challenges" (Tues., Sept. 12, 7 pm, Benes Rooms of HWCC). SNC events are free & open to the public.

Delaware County Fair (9/16-23) – \$

The 2017 Delaware County Fair will be held from Sept. 16-23. Little Brown Jug Day is Thurs., Sept. 23.

Stratford Harvest Fair (9/23) – \$

Registration is not needed for the annual Harvest Fair of the Stratford Ecological Center (Sat., 9/23, 10 am – 4 pm). The family-friendly event includes rides, tours, food, entertainment, information booths, and more. There is a per-car parking fee.

Earthdance 2017 (9/23)

The annual Earthdance event to celebrate peace and justice around the world will once again be held at OWU's HWCC Campus Center (Sat., 9/23, 5-9 pm).

CITY OF DELAWARE

The City of Delaware in August

City Council and City commissions are back to a full schedule in August. City Council meets Mon., Aug. 14 and 28. Other commissions, committees & boards that meet in Aug. are: Delaware South NCA (Tues., Aug. 1, 4 pm); Planning Commission (Wed., Aug. 2); Board of Zoning Appeals (Wed., Aug. 9); Parks & Recreation Advisory Board (Tues., Aug. 15); Finance Committee (Wed., Aug. 16, 1 pm); Parking & Safety Committee (Mon., Aug. 21, 7 pm); Shade Tree Commission (Tues., Aug. 22); and Historic Preservation Commission (Wed., Aug. 23). It is possible for meetings to get added, canceled, or rescheduled, so have a look at the City's webpage (www.delawareohio.net) before embarking on your trip to City Hall. All meetings take place at 7 pm at 1 S. Sandusky St. unless otherwise noted.

DORA Update

City Manager Tom Homan has decided not to submit an application for a designated outdoor refreshment area (DORA) in downtown Delaware at this time. The City is looking for more input from affected businesses and the community first. At the June 24 meeting of City Council some people warned against alcohol (as well as medical marijuana). While these folks no doubt meant well, City Council has every right to restrict DORA to a certain area, to certain days and hours, to certain types of alcohol, and to special events. If implemented and policed properly, a DORA district would enhance the city's atmosphere and character by making it more visitor-friendly. This is not primarily about money and profit at all; it is about making Delaware a warm and welcoming place. "Community Matters" is 100% for "freedom, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" provided it is not harmful to anyone. Other cities have successfully introduced DORAs, and it is fair to state that pretty much all of Europe is one big DORA district, with no ill consequences. The City should also consider the cost if DORA is rejected. Does it want to become known as a cold Calvinistic place where prohibition rules and rigid regulations apply? That's like putting up a big sign for employees and visitors that says, "Keep away!" Surely, a reasonable and balanced compromise can be found.

Sakata Visit

At the July 11 meeting of the Sister City Advisory Board, Mayor Carolyn Riggie and City Manager Tom Homan provided an

update on their visit to Sakata, Japan, earlier this year. (A full presentation is still being worked on.) The 5-person delegation was treated like royalty in Sakata while it toured commercial, agricultural, administrative, educational, and cultural sites of significance. They were also treated to various elaborate dinners and ceremonies, complete with recitals involving traditional Japanese instruments, geisha dancers, and even a rare dragon dance. And each member of the group had his or her own interpreter. Both Riggie and Homan expressed great appreciation for the hospitality with which they were showered. It was noted during the conversation that by and large the Japanese tend to be more "formal" while Americans tend to be more "casual" when hosting guests. – The City of Delaware currently maintains two active sister-city partnerships with Baumholder (Germany) and Sakata (Japan). The oldest relationship with Omutninsk (Russia) is unfortunately dormant at the moment, but chairperson Rand Guebert indicated an interest in traveling to Omutninsk sometime next year to learn more about the place and the people. A fourth partnership with Arequipa (Peru) is suspended after OWU did not retain a key person. One member of the advisory board reported interest in the historical village of Lahardane (Ireland), home of a famous whiskey distillery, to establish a sister-city relationship with Delaware.

Indigent Defenders at Delaware Municipal Court

Here's an item that has puzzled us for years. It again came up at City Council during the 7/24 meeting. Under federal, state, and county laws the City of Delaware has a responsibility "to provide legal counsel to indigent persons charged with a violation of a City ordinance for which the penalty or any possible adjudication includes the potential loss of liberty." However, in practice the City views itself as exempt from the legal requirement: "Because defendants typically are not entitled to a public defender when charged under the City's Codified Ordinances, we have not had to issue a payment to indigent defense services during the life of this agreement." The document in question is an agreement between the City of Delaware and the Delaware County Commissioners. One explanation we have heard was that Delaware Municipal Court generally handles misdemeanor cases that do not result in imprisonment. However, that is not always true. Besides, countless misdemeanor cases have "the potential" of resulting in loss of liberty. The City's explanation seems disingenuous and appears to be motivated by money rather than a genuine concern for best judicial practices. We have witnessed cases where the presence of a lawyer or a public defender could have made the difference. In addition, under federal and state rules judges may waive fees and fines for indigent defenders. Again, the City has an ironclad policy that prohibits that option. "Never," is the word that City Attorney Darren Shulman used last year.

An Anti-Tethering Ordinance for Delaware?

Many dogs live in deplorable conditions. They are permanently tethered to a fixed object with a chain, rope, or cable and often have no shelter, water, food, or interaction with people or other animals. They are typically neglected, their fur may be matted or rubbed off, their necks may be sore and infected, and they have inadequate veterinary care. You have to wonder why some people even have dogs if they don't interact with them. There are plenty of such unfortunate animals in Delaware. Some are starving for affection; others have become neurotic and aggressive. For example, there is an energetic Rottweiler that is both permanently chained and inside a metal cage. However, when you bring such cases to the attention of officials or the local Humane Society (as we too have done) the typical answer is, "There is nothing we can do," especially if the dog is on private property. One persistent Delaware resident, Shannon Roof, now wants to change the situation, and in Council member Chris Jones she has found a helper who will introduce legislation soon that will hopefully ban the practice within city limits. Shannon Roof, who briefly spoke at the City Council meeting of 7/24, explained that about half of the U.S. states and numerous communities already prohibit inhumane tethering as well as 13 places in Ohio, and she wants Delaware to join the ranks of these enlightened communities. The specific legislation she proposes is similar to Ohio Bill 94 that restricts the outdoor tethering of animals. The U.S. Humane Society also has recommendations for such state laws and local ordinances. – There is nothing wrong with tethering a dog for brief periods of time or let it

gallivant around on an extended "pulley run" in the back yard. However, to condemn a dog to solitary confinement year-round 24/7 with abysmally minimal attention and care is no longer acceptable in the 21st century. Dog owners need to be educated about more humane options. Shannon Roof's and Chris Jones' leadership is therefore most welcome.

Police Department Does Not Issue Annual Reports

Prompted by a question at the Civil Service Commission, Police Chief Bruce Pijanowski confirmed on July 12 that his department does not publish annual reports. He did, however, say that his offices produces yearly statistical reports and that some of that information is included in the annual budget requests that the police department submits. Among the tracked data are property crimes and drug cases, he stated. – In this day and age of accountability and transparency it is surprising that the Delaware Police Department is an outlier that does not issue public annual reports that inform taxpayers about where a huge part of the City's tax revenue goes. In addition, the police department has a significant number of positive neighborhood initiatives going on that the city can be proud of and residents may want to know about. Pijanowski and the City have never given a reason for their lack of communication in this area.

Bulk-Item Pickup Now Twice a Month

Residents of the City of Delaware can now schedule a pickup for bulk items for the second or fourth Tuesday of each month. The cost either day is \$25 for up to three bulk items per stop. Residents will need to pay and schedule in advance at the City's Public Works facility, 440 E. William St.



Springfield Branch Trail Extended

The Springfield Branch multi-purpose trail has been extended by another 670 feet to the west and now connects David & Ross streets with Todd St. & Park Ave. The new bike & pedestrian path is beautiful, but Todd St. is in dire need of some TLC. We recommend taking the next street over, Columbus Ave., instead. – The Springfield Branch Trail, a former railroad track, now runs all the way from OWU's Roy Rike soccer field on the west side across US 23 and the Olentangy River to E. Winter St. on Delaware's east side. It is a safe and fun path for families to bike, skateboard, jog, or walk the dog, but sections of it are isolated and perhaps should be avoided after dark. Please keep this trail and all other trails free of litter.

Howald Industrial Park

Howald Industrial Park on London Rd. has recently opened a new daytime dirt road on the north side of the property where Toledo St. used to dead-end. It is now possible to avoid the long and awkward detour along Curtis St. and London Rd. Cutting through private property is normally unlawful, but Howald Industrial Park, with all its businesses, is similar to a shopping mall or strip mall, and so using its streets and alleys should be legal. In any case, there are no signs prohibiting the practice, and hundreds of motorists are already taking advantage of the situation every day. It has led to a dramatic increase of traffic on Toledo St., which used to be a quiet cul-de-sac.

Power-Washing Trees?

At the 7/24 meeting of City Council, a young entrepreneur from Springfield (Kenneth Tyree) suggested that Delaware should start to power-wash both private and public trees to clean them of discoloration, fungal spores, mold, mildew, and insects and help improve their health. The gentleman was obviously without a business plan and not particularly articulate, but we are skeptical for other reasons as well. Healthy trees are well-established and well-balanced ecosystems, living in symbiotic relationships with other life forms. They are expected to be hosts for lichens, moss, and beneficial insects. Removing all biota, as suggested, might harm the tree's health, not improve it. Also, the chemicals contained in the power-washing solution might contaminate the ground and harm the tree's root

system. If a tree is indeed dusty and dirty (e.g., from construction or bird poop), a good rain shower will take care of that for free. In addition, no amount of power-washing can get rid of invasive species and their eggs that are present under the tree's bark. – The whole concept of pressure-washing trees is as flawed and fake as the language employed. A brief document submitted to City Council contains multiple errors. It says, for example, the cleaning would improve the "pulchritudinous" of a tree, but the author clearly has no idea how to use the term. The noun is "pulchritude" (comeliness); "pulchritudinous" is the adjective. But who in their right mind would use such bombastic terms anyway? Tree-washing is bogus and an unnecessary and worthless snake-oil procedure. Delaware homeowners should not fall for that scheme. We applaud the young man's entrepreneurial spirit, but suggest that he pursue other opportunities...

Update: OWU's botany professor Dr. Laurie Anderson stated in a public email, "I agree that power-washing trees may remove beneficial organisms and may damage leaves and other tree tissues, possibly making the tree more susceptible to disease. I would not advise this, as a plant biologist." Delaware's Parks & Natural Resources Director Ted Miller informs us that in a preliminary response ODNR's Division of Forestry agrees with the assessment presented here.

A First Cherry Trees in Downtown Delaware

At the last meeting of the Shade Tree Commission on 7/25, downtown street were discussed once again, prompted by the fact that a crabapple tree in front of City Hall (S. Sandusky side) was recently damaged by a car and had to be removed. Currently, the downtown trees are almost all crabapples. There are just under 100 of them. Their spring blooms are beautiful, but business owners are not happy about the mess their fruit makes on the sidewalks. The Shade Tree Commission has discussed replacing them with honey locust trees if and when the time came because those trees have tiny leaves. However, residents should note that all trees are "messy" to some extent, invariably dropping leaves, bark, twigs, fruit, sap, and bird poop. Trees also provide numerous aesthetic and environmental benefits. Some sidewalk-sweeping is therefore inevitable. Of course, trees also provide numerous aesthetic and environmental benefits and enhance property values. In light of the flourishing sister-city relationship between Delaware and the Japanese city of Sakata, City Arborist Doug Richmond and the Shade Tree Commission have also been looking favorably at varieties of cherry trees that produce less fruit and are tolerant of cold and hot weather, urban pollution and road salt. During the week of July 24, the tree in front of City Hall was replaced with such a variety of Japanese Cherry. In an email Richmond wrote, "its formal name is *Prunus subhirtera* 'Accolade.' It's a Higan Cherry tree and should do pretty well here. It's tolerant to poor conditions." The tree will be watered by City staff until it is firmly established and monitored for its condition. If the pilot program is a success and the tree does well on Sandusky St., the City of Delaware might eventually decide to plant more of them in the downtown area once the life expectancy of the current crabapple trees is near their end. It is normal for Higan Cherry trees to flower both in the spring and in the fall, so that might come as a pleasant surprise to some folks.

Hamburg Fireworks Displays, Inc.

by Jesse Carter

The cannon shots [at the July 4 concert of the Central Ohio Symphony] were fired not by the Delaware Fire Department. That service is performed by members of Hamburg Fireworks' Delaware July 4th crew (of which I am a member). The city contracts with Hamburg to provide the fireworks show, including the "indoor effects" binary-chemical shots deployed so elegantly in lieu of actual 19th century Tsarist artillery. This crew has always been led by a professional firefighter with the city. Fire Prevention Officer Charlie Cooperider, now retired, has been our "licensed exhibitor" for several years now. With his retirement from city employment last year, our crew had no active Delaware Fire Department members (although we work in close cooperation with both the Delaware and Tri Township fire departments). Our crew members – all officially Hamburg Fireworks employees while presenting the exhibit – include two retired

firefighters, a pediatric hospital medic, an accountant, three construction specialists, a photographer, a street crew worker, and me, a newspaper reporter-turned-technical writer. We have all received many hours of safety training required to maintain our state registration to discharge exhibition-grade fireworks. Collectively, our crew members have experience from hundreds of fireworks shows.

At the July concert of the Central Ohio Symphony it was announced that the City of Delaware and the Delaware Fire Department were "in charge" (pun intended) of the 14 theatrical cannon shots during Peter I. Tchaikovsky's "1812 Overture." Community member Jesse Carter is pointing out that it is a local group affiliated with Hamburg Fireworks Displays, Inc., that is actually responsible for both the cannon shots and the actual fireworks that start at 10 pm. Lancaster-based Hamburg Fireworks was started in 1972. Below is a description taken from their website:

"Hamburg Fireworks Displays: Corporations and symphonies, festivals and sporting events, cities and politicians celebrate with Hamburg! Since 1972, the majesty, power, and beauty of Hamburg pyrotechnical displays have lit up countless celebrations and events throughout Ohio. Large outdoor spectaculars, corporate picnics, symphonic concerts with choreographed fireworks, a presidential candidate's visit, ground displays, weddings, even sporting events and special effects for the theatre – whether it's indoors or outdoors, Hamburg can do it. And do it well!"

E + R = O

The Delaware City Schools district has started a new initiative called "E + R = O": "Event + Response = Outcome." Superintendent Paul Craft says the program encourages children to think about their responses before they act. They can thus make better decisions and achieve better outcomes. Impulsive actions without considering the consequences is immature and unwise. Everybody faces difficulties and challenges in their lives. It is therefore imperative to understand events and develop appropriate responses that achieve the desired goals. Craft expects a positive change in the school district as a result of the initiative. – Not just kids, some adults too might benefit from a more deliberate approach to decision-making.

Central Ohio Symphony's 39th Season

The Central Ohio Symphony has announced the program for the 2017-18 season, its 39th and Conductor Jaime Matos-Morales 15th. As usual, the Symphony presents a good balance of traditional and modern, but the overwhelming majority of pieces will be pleasant to the ear. The dates are Sat., Oct. 14, 2017; Sun., Dec. 10, 2017; Sun., March 11, 2018; and Sat., April 28, 2018. The Oct. 2017 concert includes works by Kodály, Rachmaninoff (Piano Concerto No. 2), and Brahms (Symphony No. 2). The Dec. 2017 holiday concert welcomes back the Lone Raven Celtic band and features another world premiere by Delaware high school student Noah Goulet. The March 2018 concert includes works by Mozart, Gounod, Lehár, Verdi, and Mahler (Symphony No. 4), with soprano Laura Portune as soloist. The April 2018 concert ends the season with Verdi, Tchaikovsky, Ravel ("Daphnis and Chloé"), and music from the "Moonrise" film, accompanied by stunning scientific images of Earth's moon. Season tickets are \$80. First-time subscribers pay half price (limited seating only). Individual tickets are \$25; seniors pay \$20. To learn more about the Symphony, visit www.centralohiosymphony.org or stop by at the Symphony's office at 24 E. Winter St.

OWU Hires Marching Band Director

Ohio Wesleyan Univ. has appointed Mary Kate McNally to oversee the creation of a new marching band, effective Aug. 14. In her new role, McNally will recruit, select, and train band members. She is also responsible for programming, budgeting, and assessment. The band, scheduled to debut in 2018, will perform at athletic games, spirit activities, and public events both on and off campus. McNally has an undergraduate degree from Henderson State Univ. in Arkansas and a masters degree in music conducting from Kent State Univ. in Ohio. She has also performed as a trumpet soloist.

Maggie Smith's "Good Bones"

Maggie Smith's third poetry collection, "Good Bones" is scheduled to come out Sept. 1, 2017 (Tupelo Press). The poet brings love, compassion, and light to a dark, inhospitable world in desperate need of TLC. OWU's book club has chosen the book as its selection for fall 2017. During the academic year, the club usually meets once or twice per month from 12-1 pm at the Faculty Dining Room at HWCC. Guests are welcome; meals can be purchased on site. To be added to the mailing list, please contact Lisa Ho (llho@owu.edu) in the Chaplain's Office. – Maggie Smith is a 1999 graduate from OWU and holds an MFA degree from OSU. She lives with her husband and two kids in Bexley. She will be teaching in OWU's English Dept. in the upcoming school year to replace David Caplan who is on leave.

Sheila Fox Reflections on Sustainable Delaware Ohio (presented at SDO's Annual Meeting on July 8, 2017)

As we enter its 7th year as an organization, let's take a moment to reflect on some of what we have been up to and together offer ideas for our future. SDO was founded in early 2010 and is now a tax-exempt non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with the mission of promoting "environmental, social, and economic sustainability for the Delaware Community through awareness, advocacy, and action." Through the years our group has purchased and overseen installation of bike racks, shown movies and hosted discussion panels and lectures on a variety of sustainability issues. We've conducted tours to water and waste treatment plants, a recycling facility, participated in the GEO solar tour, and we've worked with the City of Delaware and the City's Watershed Coordinator on a variety of issues such as clean-ups and community gardens. Our hardworking, dedicated volunteers have shared the message of sustainability in many venues. We have produced press releases and written numerous letters to the editors of the Delaware Gazette and the Columbus Dispatch. We regularly table at First Fridays and local events like the Stratford Fall Harvest Festival and Master Gardener's "Ready, Set, Grow" workshop. We promoted one of the first local-menu projects and sponsored a neighborhood FreeCycle event. We have leveraged our time and efforts by partnering with Ohio Wesleyan University, schools and career centers, the Delaware General Health District, MORPC, FLOW, Sierra Club, Stratford Ecological Center, Simply Living, Preservation Parks, Master Gardeners, area church green teams, and others. We have learned and grown, added rain barrels and solar panels, compost bins, clothes lines, green home improvements, and expanded our gardening skills. We've taken civic action, entering the debate to allow backyard chickens, and joined rallies and marches. In fall of 2015, SDO registered as a non-profit 501(c)3, making us eligible for grants. That allowed us to become a beneficiary of the Delaware County Community Market, and we will be partnering with the Columbus Foundation shortly. Of course, any donations to SDO are tax deductible! David Soliday launched our long-awaited new website and Bill Kizer helped design and acquire a new professional sign. SDO has continued to leverage our efforts in partnering with other non-profits. We helped promote the Community Solar initiative, spearheaded by SDO's own David Carpenter. Thanks to his tireless efforts, 35 local rooftops have added solar panels! This past June, we once again partnered with the Northern Olentangy Watershed (NOW) Festival, sponsoring a rain barrel and the annual Duck Race. We continue to support the great work of Keep Delaware County Beautiful and their amazing director, Jenifer Way-Young, cleaning up our waterways and collecting and recycling all types of waste. Many people learned much more about the serious threat of climate change when SDO, in partnership with Citizens' Climate Lobby, Interfaith Power & Light, and First Presbyterian's Earthcare group, sponsored five free screenings of Leonardo DiCaprio's documentary "Before the Flood," followed by lively discussion. In September 2016, SDO was honored to be the recipient of Earthdance Ohio, a globally connected festival promoting peace and justice through music and dance. We've tabled at First Friday for many years, and in early 2017 we debuted our "Bag Monster" created from plastic bags, designed to call attention to the issue of plastic-bag pollution. Steve and Stephanie Gregory opened their home to the bag monster creation party. Thanks to the Gregory family for modeling the costume at First Friday! Our members have continued their civic engagement, bringing concerns about the proposed bike path to Delaware City Council and remaining

engaged with the concerns and actions around malodors in the city. As we reach the second half of 2017 and celebrate our seventh birthday, we are excited to look ahead and continue our work, promoting "environmental, social, and economic sustainability for the Delaware community through awareness, advocacy, and action."

New Beginnings UMC

An interesting experiment is taking place at New Beginning UMC at 2163 State Rt. 36/37 East (across from the Kroger Distribution Center). On a 19.3-acre site a new church is forming, but it is like no other church you have seen. Lead pastor David Carter's vision is to create a welcoming community center where people can play, jog, fish, eat, watch movies, socialize, worship, and more. The possibilities are endless. What's also different and intriguing about the project is that Pastor Carter is going back to the original meaning of "church" ("ekklesia"), which meant "assembly, congregation": people first, buildings second. Eventually, a worship center will be constructed on the site, once the old church at 385 E. William St. is sold, but at the moment there is only a shelter house ("pavilion") with restrooms, a garage, and a small pond. That did not stop church members from holding a first service on July 9, which was attended by some thirty people. The next service is scheduled for Sun., Aug. 6 (10 am).

The Economic Impact of Ironman 70.3

The economic impact of Ironman 70.3 on local businesses and the City of Delaware remains muted. The city lacks lodging options, especially in the downtown area. In addition, OWU missed a business opportunity by not developing a registration system for thousands of athletes and their friends and family to stay in campus dorms in July. Furthermore, Delaware does not offer major popular attractions such as a zoo or an amusement park. While the city has a lot of things to offer, they are typically special-interest sites and activities that attract smaller crowds. Therefore, once again most Ironman participants will stay and eat in areas such as Polaris or Worthington. While the direct economic impact of Ironman may be limited, the event has positive indirect benefits. It "puts Delaware on the map," enhances the city's reputation, and leads to more interest among businesses, workers, and developers.

The Ironman Empire

Few people know that the Ironman empire is actually owned by the Chinese company Dalian Wanda, which acquired it in 2015 for \$650 million. The real-estate conglomerate Dalian Wanda, in turn, is owned by Wang Jianlin, one of China's and the world's richest men. For instance, Dalian Wanda is the world's biggest owner of movie theaters after having acquired AMC for \$2.6 billion in 2012 and Legendary Entertainment for \$3.5 billion in 2016. Its sports division, too, is aggressively expanding its portfolio in all directions. Ironman already hosts more than 200 events in 50 countries around the world that involve more than 400,000 athletes, but it is now also moving into marathons, cycling, and mountain-bike racing. – Mainland Chinese companies own astronomical assets in the U.S. and around the globe, but the data is often shielded from public inspection. Your local farm or factory, power company or airport, radio or television station, hotel or movie theater, food store or restaurant chain may very well be Chinese-owned without residents having a clue. Numerous international companies operate within Delaware and Franklin County and even within the City of Delaware. There is normally nothing wrong with that at all. It is, of course, also true that American businessmen (including President Donald Trump's family) own assets worth billions in other countries. People and politicians should be more assertive about demanding disclosure of such arrangements that may not always be in the best interest of stakeholders and the host country. A red line should be drawn when foreign companies and governments, especially those with an unfriendly attitude, own and operate critical infrastructure components such as power plants, railroad companies, pipelines, seaports, and telecommunications companies.

Container Gardening

At the 7/22 "Garden Talks" with the Delaware County Master Gardeners at the Ross Community Garden, SWCI board member Cindi Montgomery expertly discussed the pros and cons of container gardening. Container gardening has numerous advantages, she explained. Even when space is limited, vegetables and herbs can be grown on a patio or in a backyard. The typical container is small

enough to be carried or rolled in and out of the sun or shade. Convenience is another benefit; you have access to fresh herbs or fresh beans and peas within a few steps of your kitchen. It is also easier to improve the soil and manage pests when you work with containers. Since some homeowner associations (HOAs) prohibit gardening, container gardening may be an acceptable alternative. In addition, it is cheap because practically anything can be used as a "garden," provided it has good drainage. Using containers is also a good way to introduce children to growing radishes, lettuce, or tomatoes and to beautify your home with decorative flowers. As gardeners know, many plants are aggressive and will grow new roots everywhere they can, so containers help constraint plants' tendency to invade neighboring beds. Using containers makes it also less likely that produce will be taken by other people, compared to a community garden. The main disadvantage of container gardening is that plants need to be watered more often. The smaller the container, the quicker it tends to dry out. – Future "Garden Talks" are scheduled for 8/5 (tomatoes), 8/19 (herbs), and 8/26 (putting your garden to bed for the winter). The talks are held on Sat. mornings (10-11 am) in the gazebo behind the Ross Community Garden at 55-A Ross St. on the corner of S. Liberty St. They are free & open to the public.

COUNTY & CENTRAL OHIO

County Decides to Buy DACC North Campus

The Delaware County Commissioners decided at its July 27 meeting to acquire the 147,000-square-foot building owned by the Delaware Area Career Center (DACC) located at 1610 State Rt. 521 in Brown Township for \$1.7 million. The plan is to consolidate existing county offices at 109 N. Sandusky St., 149 N. Sandusky St., and 50 Channing St., which include the Sheriff's and Engineering offices. Those buildings would eventually be vacated and could possibly be sold. The property at 521 State Rt. covers some 64 acres and has room to expand. There is also no shortage of parking space. Commissioners also stated that maintaining a single building is better for customer service and financially cheaper.

DGHD Monitors Communicable Diseases

The latest quarterly report from the Delaware County General Health District (DGHD) provides an overview on reportable communicable diseases in Delaware County from April through June 2017. The good news is that there were no large outbreaks of Legionella, Meningitis, Salmonella, or Varicella (Chickenpox), etc., involving hundreds of people. There were, however, increases in Campylobacter (6 cases), Chlamydia (92), Gonorrhea (27), Hepatitis C (29), and Varicella (6). The increase in Hepatitis C is likely linked to the current opioid epidemic in Ohio. Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease, is the most prominent reportable communicable disease in Delaware County at the moment. Chances are the actual number is even higher since most people show no symptoms when infected. Interestingly, tick-borne and mosquito-borne illnesses are rare, according to the report. For example, the five-year average for Lyme disease is only 1.0. Other reportable communicable diseases are absent from the list entirely (e.g., Measles, Rabies, and Zika) because there were zero cases in Delaware County during the second quarter of 2017. – The DGHD actively monitors reportable communicable diseases 24/7/365. A system is in place that informs the DGHD of sudden increases in emergency-room visits and over-the-counter medication sales. Staff are on call day and night to take calls from residents, health-care providers, laboratories, and the Ohio Dept. of Health to ensure a rapid response in case of an outbreak.

Andrew Brenner Receives ECOT Money

The Electronic Classroom of Tomorrow (ECOT) and the founder of the charter school, Bill Lager, have been accused and convicted of defrauding the State of Ohio of countless millions of dollars for students who did not exist or did not do the required work. While the legal battle raged, ECOT and Lager transferred a total of \$122,532 through the first half of 2017 to the Ohio Republican Party, Rep. Andrew Brenner (R-Powell) who is chairman of the House Education Committee, and Rep. Larry Householder (R-Glenford). Brenner has been a major proponent of private, for-profit charter schools for years while being dismissive of public schools, calling them

a form of "socialism." We can see now why that was the case: in a lucrative quid-pro-quo arrangement, the two sides handsomely benefitted from each other, to the detriment of Ohio taxpayers. Brenner aided and abetted a business with criminal proclivities and thus became ECOT's willing accomplice. If and when push comes to shove, he will of course plead ignorance and innocence, but let's hope he will at least pay the appropriate political price for his misguided leadership.

Powell Bans Sale of Tobacco Products

The City of Powell has approved an ordinance that bans the sale or distribution of cigarettes, other tobacco products, or alternative nicotine products to persons under 21 years old. The so-called "T21 law" went into effect on July 19. – "Community Matters" is generally not in favor of harsh prohibitions and would not recommend a similar ordinance for the City of Delaware. The use of tobacco products is certainly harmful and wasteful, but we recommend an education-based approach that does not criminalize normal teenage behavior.

Pat Tiberi "Leveling Educational Playing Field"

I am writing today as a taxpayer and as the father of four daughters who attend Olentangy Local Schools about the inequitable state funding between non-public schools and Olentangy. Right now, Olentangy receives less than half the state funding per student than the average Ohio private school. I strongly support private schools, am a firm believer in school choice, and think no child should ever be tethered to a failing school. However, when non-public schools receive twice the state funding as our public schools, it tells you that Ohio's school funding formula is fundamentally unfair to fast-growing schools and districts like Olentangy. This issue needs to be corrected so that there is a more fair and level playing field for all our local students.

Pat Tiberi's statement appeared as a letter to the editor of the "Delaware Gazette" on July 3, 2017. The Congressman is perfectly correct: inequitable school funding is a disgrace that privileges some and disadvantages others. The courts have routinely rejected the practice, but little has changed. Consistent and predictable, fair and equitable school funding should be a top priority for all lawmakers.

Sheriff's Office Settles Lawsuit

In 2012, two sheriff deputies picked up a drunk and disoriented man, Uriel Juarez-Popoca, 22. He spoke little English, and the officers decided to drop him off at Taco Bell near the intersection of I-71 and State Rt. 36/37, joking that someone at the Mexican fast-food restaurant was bound to understand him. Shortly thereafter, Juarez-Popoca was struck and killed on the highway by a vehicle. A civil suit by his family ensued and was finally settled, after almost five years, this year for \$300,000. Sheriff Martin admits that this was a dark moment for the Delaware County Sheriff's Office and says he does not believe that his deputies would make the same misguided decision today. For example, his office now works with the interpreter service LanguageLine. – There are other wrongful-death cases pending against the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, and the resulting lack of transparency and news black-out is infuriating. Not one of these cases is mentioned in the Sheriff's 2016 annual report. As is typical in such instances, pending litigation is used as a pretext to protect an institution's image and brand, resulting in a conspiracy of silence that is not conducive to trust-building.

Stomping Police Officer Fired

In an April 8 incident that was caught on video, Columbus Police Officer Zachary Rosen, 32, violently stomped on a subdued and helpless suspect who was handcuffed and lying on his stomach. The video showed the man's head bouncing off the sidewalk. Public condemnation was swift and decisive, and the City of Columbus has since fired the officer for the use of "unreasonable force" in violation of the values, expectations, and policies of its police division. Civil-rights groups and the NAACP welcomed the decision to purge the ranks of a "sadistic and cruel" officer who had a years-long history of anger issues and being a violent bully. Only last year he killed another suspect with 15 gun shots the previous year. (That incident is still

under investigation and may or may not have been justified.) Rosen's colleagues at the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) Capital City Lodge No. 9, however, saw things differently. They organized a rally "to show support" for their stomping hero. Once again the public reacted with outrage to this problematic camaraderie, calling the FOP's behavior morally "repugnant" and "reprehensible." It was noted that gratuitous violence was unprofessional and violated public trust and confidence in the integrity of the safety forces. It was also pointed out that the brotherhood of police is not above the law and was misguided in their attempt to protect one of their members from justice. At least one letter writer demanded the resignation of Columbus Police Chief Kim Jacobs who had only recommended a 3-day suspension for Officer Rosen. – We all know that police officers do have a tough job. And, like the rest of us, they are human. However, it is imperative that they conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards and use best practices only. One rogue officer of the law, especially when shielded by his (or her) colleagues and superiors, can taint the reputation and integrity not only of the police department but that of an entire city. Any misconduct must be addressed openly, swiftly, and decisively. Delaware's Police Department is lucky that it hasn't experienced any "Ferguson" or "Dallas" incidents yet, but they are common all around Ohio and across the nation. The greatest care and sensitivity is needed to enforce the law in a fair, equal, and humane manner. Good communication skills, exceptional community relations, and de-escalation techniques are the way to go, not stomping techniques and other forms of gratuitous violence. The "Columbus Dispatch" is right when it says that law-enforcement officers who cannot police and control themselves should not police and control others.

ACLU Announces Fall Series

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Ohio has announced a series of events involving important civil-liberties issues. Events will be held at the ACLU of Ohio, 1108 City Park Ave., Suite 203, Columbus, Ohio 43206. Light refreshments will be served. The topics & dates are as follows: 1. "Understanding the First Amendment – Protest Rights, Civil Disobedience & the Right to Dissent" (Tues., Aug. 15, 5:30 pm); 2. "Voting Rights – A Discussion on Barriers to the Polls Today" (Tues., Sept. 26, 5:30 pm); and 3. "Transgender Spotlight – An Evening of Documentary and Discussion" (Thurs., Oct. 19, 5:30 pm). The series is free & open to the public. To RSVP, please the website (www.acluohio.org), send an email to rsvp@acluohio.org, or call [614-586-1959](tel:614-586-1959).

"Daily Stormer" Founder Is in Hiding

The founder of the "Daily Stormer," a racist and anti-Semitic Neo-Nazi website, is in hiding. The Southern Poverty Law Center is actively seeking Westerville-born Andrew Anglin to serve him court papers involving a civil lawsuit. His Las-Vegas-based lawyer, Marc Randazza, has not been cooperative. – Anglin was profiled in the March 2017 issue of "Community Matters." At that time, some suspected that he lived abroad. While he may not technically be a fugitive of the law, he sure acts like one.



Delaware Dam Opens Spillway

After heavy rains, the beach and marina of the Delaware Reservoir were closed over the weekend of July 15 and 16. The lake's normal water level in the summer is 915 feet, but it reached as high as 923.55 feet on Sat., July 16, before the spillway was partially opened. By comparison, the much deeper and larger Alum Creek Lake rose only three quarters of a foot. – The Delaware Dam was constructed in 1948 as part of a comprehensive effort to control and reduce flooding in the Ohio River watershed. The system is owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Huntington District). Essentially the Delaware Reservoir serves as a giant retention pond, and the water is held back until the Scioto River and other downstream waterways have cleared. Opening the spillway is a rare event.

Delaware Dam Needs Warning System for Kayakers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Huntington District) periodically releases large amounts of water from the Delaware Reservoir. It did so over the weekend of July 15-16 when it partially opened the spillway after heavy rainfalls, allowing between 2,500 and 4,000 cubic feet of water per second to escape. A siren warns fishermen below the dam when a water release is imminent. But there is no effective system in place that alerts kayakers and canoeists on the Olenangy River between Preservation Parks' boat launch on Main Rd. (River Run Park) and Delaware. About a month ago, a sudden rush of water surprised two kayakers in that area. They had to be rescued by emergency services, but luckily escaped serious harm. "Community Matters" has heard only anecdotal stories about the incident and is unaware of the details. However, Sue Hagan from Delaware County Preservation Parks wrote to us that the park system is aware of the situation and is taking steps to address it "by way of the information we provide on our website and in the park kiosk." That sounds like the beginning of a good plan. In addition, the City of Delaware (through its Watershed / Sustainability Coordinator) might also put such information on its website. Perhaps the U.S. Canoe Association (USCA) could play a role as well. As kayaking is becoming more popular in Central Ohio, the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers must make every effort to announce and disseminate plans to release more than the average amount of water as early and as widely as possible. If it does not act in a responsible manner, more accidents are likely to occur in the future.

Chase HQ at Polaris Goes Solar

JPMorgan Chase & Co. has announced that it will build Ohio's largest rooftop solar-panel array on top of its McCoy Center at Polaris, which houses some 10,000 employees. It is part of a larger plan to rely exclusively on renewable energy by 2020 for all its buildings and branch offices. Work on the 20-megawatt project will begin as early as this fall. The bank also said it would finance more clean-energy projects across the world by making available some \$200 billion by 2025. – State and federal legislators have failed abysmally to support renewable energy and climate-change research. Their campaigns are largely financed by the fossil-fuel industry, and thus they have no incentive to change the status quo. It is gratifying to see business and industry play a leadership role. Green energies and emission-free vehicles are the future, but politicians are in denial about it.

BIA Is Looking for New Executive Director

James ("Jim") B. Hilz has left the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio after 13 years as executive director. The BIA is currently looking for a new executive director. Their website says that a position profile would be posted "shortly." – The trade association is best known for putting on the annual Parade of Homes. It was recently in the news for criticizing the supposedly "onerous and expensive" tree ordinances of the City of Delaware and for demanding that City Council play a lesser role when it comes to the approval of new housing developments. Generally speaking, they want to see the whole process deregulated.

OHIO

The Strange Case of Josh Mandel

The 100-year old Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL) recently issued a report on the alt-right's hate speech, conspiracy theories, anti-Semitism, racism, and white supremacy. Among the individuals named were Mike Cernovich and Jack Posobiec. Cernovich is a right-wing blogger known for xenophobia and misogyny. He wrote, among other things, that "date rape does not exist." Posobiec is best known for his "Pizzagate conspiracy" which claimed that Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton operated a sex-ring involving children within a pizza place in Washington, D.C. It prompted a man to open fire inside the pizzeria because he wanted to rescue the non-existing children. Although Ohio Treasurer Josh Mandel is Jewish and the son of a Holocaust survivor, he said in a recent tweet that he stood with Cernovich and Posobiec. He is clearly taking a page out of Trump's playbook, hoping to replicate his hero's success by appealing to the far right. Like Trump, he has also made some extreme statements against

the media, sanctuary cities, and higher education. And, of course, he too wants to build "the wall," forgetting that many Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany were denied entry into the U.S. and other countries and deported back to German concentration camps where they perished. Being an alter ego of Trump is not a strategy that will help him defeat Senator Sherrod Brown in 2018, but perhaps his true aim is to land a job in the Trump administration. Given the revolving-door situation in the White House, he might actually have a chance.

Sheriff Richard Jones Lets People Die

There were 192 overdose deaths in Butler County in 2016, but County Sheriff Richard Jones says, "I don't do Narcan." Instead, he and his officers let people die rather than administer life-saving Naxalone, aka Narcan. Jones was an early supporter of President Trump, and he seems to share his disdain and cruelty against less fortunate folks. We were under the impression that police officers had sworn an oath to protect lives. In our view, the reckless behavior of Sheriff Jones constitutes a criminal dereliction of duty and undermines public confidence in the nation's safety forces.

Ohio Interfaith Power and Light

The Columbus Dispatch (7/24) recently published a long article on Ohio Interfaith Power and Light. IPL is a national, faith-based organization dedicated to environmental stewardship, taking care of God's creation, and combating climate change. According to the article, there were about 250 Ohio houses of worship in 2016 actively involved in the process of energy audits and increasing energy efficiency, including 54 new members that started the process. It can be a challenging process to retrofit century-old buildings, but it is possible to achieve considerable financial savings in the long run by reduced energy and water consumption. In Ohio, three houses of worship have so far received Energy Star certification from the EPA, one example being All Saints Lutheran Church on Columbus' north side. Nationwide there are 40 state affiliates with 20,000 congregations of all denominations. In Delaware too several churches are in conversation with IPL and the Ohio executive director, Sara Ward., who has spoken in the community on more than one occasion. The Dispatch article also mentions that in many cases church members emulate at home and in their neighborhoods what they learned at their churches, so churches are great multipliers. To learn more about the national IPL, visit www.interfaithpowerandlight.org. To visit the Ohio IPL, go to <ohipl.org>, but for some reason the connection did not work for us.

2017 Ohioana Book Awards

The Ohioana Library has announced its 2017 book awards. The recipients are: Marisa Silver, *Little Nothing* (fiction); Douglas Brinkley, *Rightful Heritage: Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Land of America* (non-fiction); Teri Ellen Cross Davis, *Haint* (poetry); J. D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* (about Ohio or an Ohioan); Sally Derby, *Jump Back, Paul: The Life and Poems of Paul Lawrence Dunbar* (middle grade / young adult); C. F. Payne, *Miss Mary Reporting: The True Story of Sportswriter Mary Garber* (juvenile literature); and Tiffany McDaniel, *The Summer that Melted Everything* (reader's choice). – The Ohioana Library has been recognizing outstanding books by or about Ohioans since 1942.

In Defense of the Midwest

On July 10, Columbus radio host Ann Fisher conducted an interview with Jon K. Lauck, founder and president of the Midwestern History Association and author of a new book on Midwestern literature and regionalism – "From Warm Center to Ragged Edge: The Erosion of Midwestern Literary and Historical Regionalism, 1920-1965" (Iowa University Press, 2017). The Midwest used to be a powerhouse economically, politically, and culturally. It is not a coincidence that Ohio has produced a disproportionate number of American presidents. But the Midwestern moment lasted only from about 1840 to 1920. Over time, the Atlantic and Pacific coasts took over ("Bicoastalism") and are today the seats of action and the home of the nation's elites. The Midwest, on the other hand, has a reputation of being flat, boring, and monochrome – fly-over country. Interest in Midwestern literature has declined and even vanished. Only recently has there been renewed curiosity about the Midwestern world, in part due to the elections results of 2016. Lauck makes a strong case that Ohio and the

Midwest have a lot to offer, but that much remains unresearched and/or misunderstood. His book is an attempt to defend, revive, and celebrate Midwestern literature, culture, and identity against dominant trends that are indifferent to Midwestern heritage.

NATION

Controversy over the Declaration of Independence

On July 4, National Public Radio (NPR) could be heard severely attacking an evil tyrant's long train of destructive abuses: he cut off free trade, hindered immigration, delayed political appointments, demanded loyalty from judges, and incited domestic insurrection and convulsions. The many instances of cruel behavior are unworthy of the head of a civilized nation, the text said. The statement concluded that an undemocratic despot whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant is "unfit to be the ruler of a free people" and had to go. A regime that is deaf to the voice of justice must be abolished and replaced with a government of, by, and for the people. – Supporters of Donald Trump were not amused. They angrily accused NPR of a left-wing agenda and conspiracy that condoned violence and treason. That's why NPR (and PBS) needed to be defunded, they said (a long-standing demand of conservatives). As it turned out, however, the despot and tyrant criticized on NPR was not Donald Trump at all. Instead, it was the British King George III, and what listeners heard was the American Declaration of Independence from 1776. The story is noteworthy on many levels. For one thing, it illustrates the poor level of education in the U.S. in general and among Trump supporters specifically. How about making it mandatory for every American to read the Declaration of Independence and the American Constitution on an annual basis? Or perhaps no one should be eligible to vote unless they pass a civics test first? That's the real "voter fraud" in this country – millions of manipulated voters who don't understand the real issues, the separation of powers, and the proper role of the American presidency.

"The Stupid Party"

In 2013, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal told his fellow Republicans, "We've got to stop being the stupid party." Apparently, they did not listen. A much-discussed new Pew Research Center poll found that 58% of Republicans now say that colleges and universities have a negative impact on the U.S. In a 7/16 editorial, the (conservative) "Columbus Dispatch" called this development stunning, alarming, and "a real danger." Less political and financial support for higher education undermines access for less affluent students. In addition, "in a knowledge-based economy, the lessening of American universities threatens our global competitiveness. This is a culture war that can only produce losers." – America is in steep decline in almost every area, including education, but leading politicians don't seem to mind. They are taking advantage of the fact that uneducated voters are easier to manipulate and control. The actual welfare and prosperity of the nation does not seem to be part of their calculus.

Proposed NEA & NEH Cuts Restored

Numerous Delaware groups benefit from the National Endowment of the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), but in spring President Trump proposed the complete elimination of the NEA and the NEH. Thankfully, it is Congress rather than the President that builds the federal budget, according to the U.S. Constitution. In July, the House Appropriations Committee approved \$145 million for each of the agencies (a \$5 million reduction for each of them). The bill still has to be thrashed out by the House and Senate, but it sounds like the NEA and the NEH will be around a little while longer. Both agencies have done a lot of good over the years for local communities by supporting artists, writers, composers, museums, orchestras, historical societies, historic preservation, radio programs, film projects, and so on. For example, NEA money has allowed the Central Ohio Symphony to do special projects. If and when you have a chance to thank Ohio's congressmen and senators for their support of the arts and humanities, please don't hesitate to do so. They need to hear from their constituents.

The Fundamental Question

President Trump said last month in Poland, "the fundamental question of our time is whether the West has the will to survive." Had

he talked about the danger of climate change, we might actually agree with him. However, he was talking about something different altogether – Islamic terrorism. Granted, Islamic terrorism is a threat nations around the world need to take seriously and guard against. However, it is but one of a hundred threats. Ask yourself -- what kills people in Ohio? Clearly, it is heart attacks and cancer, automobile crashes and firearms that kill thousands and tens of thousands Ohioans annually. The opioid crisis is on track to claim over 4,000 victims in the state in 2017. Is there anyone seriously suggesting that "Islamic terrorism" is the culprit? The fundamental question for most Ohio residents is their jobs and wages, housing and food, health and families. Ohio has underperformed for decades. Ending pointless wars in the Middle East would not only free up billions and trillions of dollars that could be invested in jobs and people on this continent and in this nation, it might also help reduce the threat of Islamic terrorism.

Trump and The Boy Scouts

Normally, presidential speeches at the quadrennial jamborees of the Boy Scouts of America are uplifting and inspiring events, free of politics. But President Trump is not a conventional statesman, and so on 7/24 he used the festive occasion to give a speech that people who listened to it in disbelief afterwards described as ugly, icky, unseemly, polarizing, disgraceful, and more. It reminded some people of a Hitler Youth or Nazi Youth rally. Trump's talk was not about the nearly 40,000 children and teenagers in attendance, but about himself, his election win, his adversaries, and the "fake-news media" out to get him. In short, he presented a campaign speech, which is perhaps the only speech he knows how to give. An immediate uproar and firestorm ensued and both Trump and the Boy Scouts were criticized for inappropriately injecting politics into a celebratory occasion. Both the tone and the message of Trump's talk alarmed many, and there was agreement, even among conservative supporters, that he should not have usurped the situation to discuss politics. It created another unfortunate distraction for the president himself and a major embarrassment for the struggling Boy Scouts who went down from 4.3 million participating youth to 2.3 million in just a few years. Trump himself was never in the Boy Scouts and seems to know little of their values. Voices pointed out that he is "the living embodiment of everything that the Boy Scouts are not": self-centered, egotistic, greedy, narcissistic, unkind, pompous, bombastic, self-aggrandizing, disloyal, incapable of compassion & empathy, and unethical.

7/27 Update: In a statement, Boy Scout leader Michael Surbaugh sincerely apologized to the scouting family that the jamboree was "overshadowed" by inserting politics into it. His statement also mentioned several timeless Boy Scout values: trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, courage, fairness, honor, respect for others, and the ability "to bring people together to do good in the world." Too bad Donald Trump was never in the Boy Scouts; he might have turned out a different man.

Bernie Sanders' Wife "Investigated"

Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders remains an almost saintly figure among many Democrats, but his wife, Jane Sanders, is now under a federal investigation for her role in 2010 land deal when she served as president of Burlington College, a small liberal arts school of about 200 students. Hoping to relocate the school to a more attractive lakefront property, the college took out a \$2.6 million loan from People's United Bank. The plan was to repay it quickly with the help of philanthropic donations and tuition income from increased enrollment. However, neither development came to pass and Ms. Sanders resigned in 2011 under pressure from the Board of Trustees. Lingering financial difficulties and crushing financial debt eventually led to the demise of Burlington College, which closed its doors in May of 2016. – At issue seems to be whether Ms. Sanders' and the college's loan deal was an unintentional and unfortunate error in judgment, based on overly optimistic assumptions, or whether it was a deliberate plan to secure the loan under fraudulent circumstances. Supporters of Bernie Sanders call the investigation, which was started by the Vermont campaign manager of Donald Trump (Brady Toensing), a politically motivated witch hunt started five years after Jane Sanders had left Burlington College. They claim that the intent of the probe is to discredit the senator, to undermine his popularity, and to derail a possible 2020 campaign. – We are not privy to the legal and financial details of the

case, but our preliminary assessment is that Ms. Sanders and the college's Board of Trustees made a serious error in judgment when they pursued ambitious plans based on unrealistic assumptions. They should have known that not every donor pledge is honored and that the recruitment of freshmen is fiercely competitive. However, this kind of moronic thing happens all the time, in every industry. A bad deal alone does not constitute criminal behavior. Ms. Sanders deserved to be replaced in 2011 when the college needed a new direction, but a criminal investigation into the circumstances is reminiscent of another Republican attempt to assign guilt and blame where none could be found – Benghazi. Besides, Mr. Sanders had little or nothing to do with Burlington College's master plan to create a new campus. The "investigation" is clearly intended to create a permanent distraction and embarrassment for the popular senator and to possibly sideline a major adversary of President Trump.

The KKK Marches Again

Right-wing organizations were elated when Donald Trump won the presidential elections in 2016. They felt their hour had finally come. Among the many white supremacist groups is the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). On July 8, members of the Loyal White Knights of the KKK rallied in Charlottesville, Va., to protest a City Council decision to take down a statue of General Robert E. Lee in Emancipation Park (formerly Lee Park). Many came armed and some wore white robes, shouting "white power." According to the KKK and other right-wing groups, there is an effort underway to erase "white history" and identity. "Our history should not be taken away from us," one of the protesters said. "Southern pride" is another often-used code word to justify the display of the Confederate Flag. A thousand or so counter-protesters, among them many African-Americans, pointed to the horrible crime and sin of slavery. According to an article in the "Washington Post," police in riot gear and gas masks did nothing to stop the KKK. Instead, they declared the demonstrating counter-protesters "an unlawful assembly" and used tear gas to disperse them.

Assault on Gays

Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits workplace discrimination based on "race, color, religion, sex, or national origin." Under President Trump, the U.S. Dept. of Justice has changed course and now argues that the term "sex" does not include the LGBTQ community and that there is no legal basis for protecting gays and lesbian employees from job or housing discrimination. The announcement came on the same day President Trump tweeted that transgender people would henceforth be barred from serving in the military. It is not clear what will happen to the thousands of transgender men and women who are currently serving honorably in the armed forces. – Some argue that the attack on gays is meant to distract public attention from the dysfunction in the White House, but homophobia, misogyny, and xenophobia have real consequences for real people when they are being scapegoated.

CTE in Former Football Players

The largest study ever conducted on CTE diagnosed Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy in 99% of 111 former NFL players and 87% of 202 former football players on all levels, including high school and college. It must be noted that the Boston study, published in "JAMA," is skewed insofar it only worked with donated brains of diseased former football players whose families suspected a link to CTE. Undoubtedly, there are former football players without any CTE symptoms. However, in the understated parlance of scientists the study quite reasonably suggests a possible link between prior participation in football and the degenerative brain disease CTE. The report also looked at behavioral and mood swings of living football players with CTE. Depending on the stage (1-4), CTE can negatively impact mood, speech, cognition, memory, and motor functions and lead to dementia. The study found that the leading cause of death among those with early stages of CTE (1-2) was suicide (27%). The NFL for years denied any connection between the game and CTE, but finally did acknowledge the link last year. – There is mounting evidence that aggressive and violent contact sports such as football or boxing, despite the use of helmets and other protective devices, have long-term negative consequences to the physical and mental health of players. This latest study reaffirms prior findings. Parents should not

let their kids play football, and perhaps the sport needs to be banned in high schools and colleges altogether.

John McCain's Brain Cancer May Be Linked to Agent Orange

John McCain's brain cancer has sparked a lively discussion among Vietnam veterans and their families. Although more than 500 Vietnam-era veterans have been diagnosed with the fatal brain cancer glioblastoma at VA health facilities since 2000, it is currently not on the list of 14 illnesses that are officially linked to Agent Orange, which means denial of benefits. Given the undeniable evidence, veterans' groups believe it is time to change the policy. – Agent Orange was widely used in Vietnam, for many years, to deprive the enemy of forest cover and food sources and also to clear brush for road construction and runways. It is estimated that up to 2.6 million American soldiers were exposed to the toxic chemical, including John McCain. "Community Matters" has studied Agent Orange in the past, participated in workshops, and published articles about it. We agree that it is very likely, even probable, that Agent Orange is indeed the main cause for John McCain's brain cancer. We also agree that the VA must amend its unreasonable and unscientific denial-of-service stance.

Endangered Species Act in Jeopardy

The 44-year-old Endangered Species Act is being rolled back by the Trump administration. The drilling, logging, and mining industries now have a friend in Washington who does not care about destruction of habitat, loss of biodiversity, and environmental degradation. Among the imperiled species are gray wolves and grizzly bears. The Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, is reportedly also reviewing protections for the threatened wild grouse in Western states.

Forest Bathing

National Public Radio (NPR) recently aired a program on the decades-old Japanese practice of "forest bathing," which is now becoming more popular in the U.S. as well. Forest bathing does not necessarily involve water. What is meant by it is the total immersion in wooded areas, usually by means of a walk or hike. It has long been known that green spaces, parks, and forests have a calming and soothing effect on humans. Unnatural city life can be demanding and stressful, and so it is not surprising to see the stress level and blood pressure go down when surrounded by nature. But a substantial body of Japanese medical and psychological "shinin-yoku" (forest bathing) research, both field and laboratory studies, has found direct and measurable evidence for additional curative benefits of forest bathing as well. For example, trees emit countless airborne chemicals, which humans perceive as smell or scent. Each tree species produces its own compounds that are used both as a form of chemical warfare and communication (see Peter Wohlleben's "The Hidden Life of Trees"). Studies have shown that these volatile "phytoncides," as they are known, have anti-microbial benefits and boost immunity not only for the trees themselves, but also for animals and humans. This symbiosis should not surprise anyone; primates and homo sapiens have evolved in forests and are "at home" in them. The smell of conifers is particularly powerful (e.g., pines, cedars, and cypresses). In the U.S., the medical analysis of forest bathing is still in its infancy. However, a new organization, the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy (ANFT), is working hard to promote the concept and to see it approved as an official and recognized form of medicine and therapy. The founder and director of the group, Amos Clifford, hopes to have trained and certified about 250 guides by 2018 and is aiming for 1,000 trained guides within three years. (The NPR report, entitled "Forest Bathing: A Retreat to Nature Can Boost Immunity and Mood," can be found through a Google search. The ANFT's website is www.natureandforesttherapy.org. More details on medical research can be found on Wikipedia's article on forest bathing.)

Banks Funding Pipelines

A nationwide campaign is underway to persuade banks to stop financing companies that build oil-and-gas pipelines. Among the local and regional banks that fund pipelines are Chase, Huntington, PNC, U.S. Bank, and Wells Fargo. Dozens of environmental groups and Native-American tribal nations have written letters, staged protests, and held meetings with bank officials. They are also asking customers

and entire communities to move their accounts elsewhere. PNC is backing Energy Transfer, the company behind the controversial Rover and Dakota pipelines. Huntington says it has no "direct lending exposure" to companies affiliated with Canadian tar sands, but it is part of a group that helped finance pipeline company Enbridge. Spokespeople for the campaign say the funding of oil-and-gas companies is associated with great financial, political, social, and environmental risk, and banks should help the nation transition to green-energy projects instead.

What Does It Mean to Be "Woke"?

The term "woke" is decades-old and has been documented in African-American writing in the 1960s and 1970s. Soul singer Erykah Boku gave it renewed prominence and relevance about ten years ago when she sang "Stay woke." Obviously, the word is related to the English verb "to wake" and its various conjugated and compound forms. It connotes awareness and vigilance. The "woke" person has pays attention, ears and eyes wide open, and is curious about and conscious of the world. The opposite would be a sleeper characterized by indifference, lack of knowledge, and complacency. Between 2012 and 2014, the word circulated widely in the Black Lives Matter movement where it acquired the specific meaning of being aware of issues related to economic, social, racial, cultural, and environmental justice. To be "woke" connotes a persistent and perennial refusal of being pacified, integrated, co-opted, and colonized. A "woke" person is not a tamed and domesticated pet, but remains wild and free. He or she is not a conformist, but an independent thinker. Once awoken from the slumber of ignorance, a "woke" person is also deeply suspicious and distrustful of established and traditional authorities and institutions. After all, these are the entities of power and privilege responsible for much of the pain and suffering that afflicts society. The institution of slavery is a good example. Someone who is "woke" has lost his or her innocence and trust forever and is wary of government and the world. Dialogue and cooperation remain possible and even desirable, but trust is not the foundation for the conversation and collaboration. "Woke" people may be fiercely individualistic compared to the "group think" of the herd, but the movement is at the same time heavily communal and collectivist. They realize that changing the system requires an organized group effort, a union of like-minded folks. Being "woke" implies a moral obligation to speak out and to educate others – David Brooks has called the Black Lives Matter and the Woke movement, somewhat hyperbolically, "the most complete social movement in America today, as a communal, intellectual, moral, and political force." It is indeed a comprehensive philosophy, encompassing all disciplines. However, Brooks' assessment is both preliminary and premature. We cannot ignore that the "Occupy" movement, with similar tenets, came and went. In addition, there are other resistance movements such as "Indivisible" that might be even broader and stronger. – Is this newsletter "woke"? We sure hope so, but readers will have to judge for themselves.

WORLD

Sperm Count in Men Down 50 Percent

A new study just published in "JAMA" shows that the sperm count in Western men has steadily declined over the decades and is now only half of what it was 40 years ago. At the going rate, Western countries do face a serious threat. People on the BBC are already talking about "human extinction." The finding is not new, of course. It merely affirms what previous studies have also concluded. The big question is why the decline is happening in the first place. The scientists involved in the latest study were hesitant to extrapolate information from the empirical data. However, they did offer the hypothesis that exposure to toxic chemicals, from the womb to the grave, might be a contributing factor, but they hastened to emphasize that more study is needed to determine the causes for the sperm-count decline. Studies in the past did conclude that "modern living" and man-made chemicals (such as fertilizers, herbicides, and plastics) may be the culprit. A 2014 report stated that glyphosate (used in Monsanto's Roundup) inhibited male fertility. Needless to say, neither the government nor the industry are inclined to fund such research, and so we will not have answers any time soon.

Vatican Criticizes Right-Wing Christians

Two Jesuit confidants of Pope Francis (Antonio Spadaro and Marcelo Figueroa) have published an article in the journal *La civita cattolica* in which they criticize right-wing American Catholicism and Evangelical Fundamentalists. The essay accuses Christian conservatives of mixing politics and religion; for sowing division and extremism; and for wanting to establish a theocratic state. In particular, the journal, an unofficial mouthpiece of the Vatican, singled out the right-wing media organization ChristianMilitant.com, which views President Trump as a soldier of God. The group is known for its dark and sinister ways and was much discussed after Trump's advisor, Steve Bannon, referred to it. Interestingly, if you search on Wikipedia for Christian Militant, you will receive a message that the text is "unavailable." ChristianMilitant.com, formerly St. Michael's Media, was founded by Michael Voris. "Community Matters" will look at the group in more detail at a later point. -- The Vatican has long condemned income inequality and other injustices of capitalism such as environmental degradation. Redistributing wealth and assisting the poor is among the oldest and most central principles of Christianity. These days, however, robbing the poor and rewarding the rich is prevalent in America. The Vatican is right to point out the hypocrisy of those conservative Christians who have little or no compassion and empathy with the poor and who are indifferent about environmental stewardship.

The Controversy Over "Plasticized Bodies"

Several decades ago, Dr. Gunther von Hagens, an anatomy professor at Germany's University of Heidelberg, invented the controversial practice of "plastination," which allowed the preservation of human (and animal) bodies. The process replaces body fluids with hardening silicone. Hagens various body shows continue to travel around the world, inspiring both awe and disgust. Defenders are riveted by the scientific details and educational value of the exhibits. OWU students who saw "Bodies: The Exhibit" in Columbus a number of years ago raved about the unforgettable experience. However, from the start there were also vociferous critics. Many asked where the hundreds of bodies came from. It turns out they are prepared in China, and that they are the bodies of executed prisoners, including political dissenters. For many years, China maintained a lucrative trade in body organs, body parts, and whole cadavers. It is fair to assume that people were killed not because they had committed a serious crime but because there was a market demand for their bodies and body parts. Church leaders have also condemned the trafficking of human bodies for commercial purposes as being degrading to human dignity. A recent showing in the Czech city of Prague brought forth a novel legal approach to shut down the exhibit there. Activists discovered an obscure law that dictates that human bodies found on land or in water be buried without delay. Authorities confirmed that the objects in the show were indeed unburied human remains and therefore had to be removed. However, they also noted that there were no penalties and that therefore criminal charges were not possible. The show's organizers were actually elated about all the fuss because it was "great advertising" for them. – Seriously, however, human remains are a sensitive subject. Should they be exhibited in museums or not? Should you be able to buy and sell such "artifacts" and "objects"? Does it make a difference if the antiquities or fossils are hundreds and thousands of years old? Is there a legitimate reason to display dead members of an indigenous group in an anthropology museum, for instance? The debate is not settled, but a consensus is slowly emerging that it is better to err on the side of showing respect. Freak shows are no longer morally defensible.

Healthy Living Reduces Risk of Dementia

Cognitive decline and dementia can be delayed, reduced, and prevented by making certain lifestyle changes, according to a new British study published in "The Lancet." The 9 risk factors listed in the report include lack of physical activity, obesity, diabetes, hearing loss, social isolation, depression, smoking, hypertension, and lack of education. The message is that dementia (incl. Alzheimer's) is controllable up to a certain point by living a healthy life that is filled with physical and mental stimulation. There is a correlation between a healthy body / heart and a healthy brain / mind. (Of course, additional risk factors such as age, gender, or genes are beyond people's control.) The study of Alzheimer's is still in its infancy, but there is a

growing body of research that suggests that more attention should be paid and more resources allocated to preventative strategies, which are cheaper and more effective in the long run.

Italy Mandates Childhood Vaccinations

Italy's parliament has given final approval to a bill that makes childhood vaccinations up to the age of 16 mandatory. The legislation was hotly contested, but passed on 7/28 by a vote of 290 to 92 with 15 abstentions. Like other countries, Italy has seen an anti-vaccination movement based on conspiracy theories and misinformation, posing an alarming threat to public health and safety.

The Case of Baby Charlie

Charlie Gard is an 11-month-old baby with a rare and fatal genetic disease (mitochondrial depletion) that has only been documented 16 times worldwide. He is blind, deaf, severely brain-damaged, suffers from violent seizures, and is on a respirator. A huge global discussion has ensued about his fate. The case has gone all the way up to the British High Court and the European Court of Human Rights. President Trump and Pope Francis also got involved. Unfortunately, a fair amount of politics also got inserted into the conversation. Charlie's parents are hoping against hope that an untested and unproven experimental treatment (nucleoside therapy) available in the U.S. might prolong their child's life. The medical establishment in the UK, however, is unanimous in their assessment that Charlie's situation is hopeless, and that any future intervention would only add more unnecessary suffering to the already tormented child. "The welfare of the child" being of paramount importance under British law, the doctors' recommendation is to take Charlie off life support. – What is right for Baby Charlie, and who gets to decide his fate? This is a tough case that raises many thorny questions. Reason, logic, and science all suggest that it's time to let Charlie die peacefully. This would not be a form of "euthanasia," as some have claimed; it would be a natural death. A religious reader might even say, God is calling him home. On the other hand, hope – even false hope – rules eternal. Charlie's parents do not feel that their son is in pain and that he deserves a chance to live a little while longer. But there is no question about the ultimate outcome. If there ever was a window for treatment and therapy, it has long closed. Charlie is dying. To artificially prolong his life is cruel and senseless. For ethical and humanitarian reasons, it seems best to let Charlie die in peace, comfort, and with dignity.

Update: The parents of Charlie Gard announced that they are dropping all legal proceedings after the American doctor advised them that it was "too late" for treatment. Charlie died on July 28 – RIP! His sorrows and sufferings are over. Our seizures, convulsions, and pains are still far away from a resolution.

Should Seven Generations Be the Standard?

We in the West generally live a one-dimensional life, indifferent to both the past and the future. Our loyalty is limited to the nucleus family we come from or live in. Politicians and business executives look forward to the next quarter, fiscal year, or election cycle only. This kind of an unhinged life does offer enormous freedom, mobility, and opportunities. It is, however, also a disconnected and truncated life full of isolation and alienation. – Let's look at the flip side of the coin. Many global civilizations and indigenous cultures hold a different view. They worship their deceased ancestors for multiple generations. Not coincidentally, cultures that practice that kind of respect for their progenitors also have a deeper understanding of and appreciation for extended-family relationships that may include uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, and male and female cousins multiple times removed. They are all part of a broader family, clan, and tribe, and they feel they have a mutual responsibility toward each other. The network provides guidance, protection, and resources and ensures that no one falls through the cracks in times of crisis. – Cultures that look back multiple generations are typically also cultures that look forward multiple generations. Societies that treasure their past are also societies inclined to protect and preserve their future. The environmental implications are clear: destroying the land, fouling the water, polluting the air, killing fauna and flora are not acceptable practices if you care about the earth. It is fine to be loyal to one's own nucleus family, but we also have an obligation toward the broader

family called the global village or humankind. – It is interesting that an encyclopedia we consulted called ancestor worship "a pagan superstition" and "a cult of the dead," thus dismissing and rejecting the practice as atavistic and even dangerous. This is typical Western thinking; it views both ancestor worship and commitment to future sustainability as a costly liability rather than a valuable asset. However, it is an attitude that must change. In the Christian Bible, the holy number "seven" plays a central role. It denotes fullness, completeness, perfection, and abundance. If the West is to survive, it must learn to think backward and forward seven generations. It is reckless and irresponsible to be indifferent about climate change, for example. We have an ethical, ancestral, and some day perhaps even legal responsibility to act to protect the planet as it has sustained us in the past. Following in the footsteps of one's ancestors does not mean we are restricted to their views and ways, religion or politics. We remain free agents and can choose our own path. But in addition to ensuring our own pursuit of happiness we have a duty to ensure that future generations too will live long and prosper. Seven generations should indeed be the ethical and legal standard when it comes to political, economic, and social decision-making. One quarter, one fiscal year, or the next election cycle is a wholly inadequate way of thinking.

Felix Pollak (1909-1987) **"Speaking: The Hero"**

I did not want to go.
They inducted me.

I did not want to die.
They called me yellow.

I tried to run away.
They courtmartialled me.

I did not shoot.
They said I had no guts.

I cried in pain.
They carried me to safety.

In safety I died.
They blew taps over me.

They crossed out my name
And buried me under a cross.

They made a speech in my home town.
I was unable to call them liars.

They said I gave my life.
I had struggled to keep it.

They said I set an example
I had tried to run.

They said they were proud of me.
I had been ashamed of them.

They said my mother should be proud.
My mother cried.

I wanted to live.
They called me a coward.

I died a coward.
They called me a hero.

FUTURE ISSUES:

Affirmative Action * Andrews House * Artificial Intelligence *
Careless Living * Cashless Society * Cyberwars * The End of Diesel *
Jeff Flake's Book * Food Trucks * Gentrification * Gerrymandering *
Homelessness * International Space Station * Rocks of Kindness *
Microchipping Employees * Ohio Race for Governor * Omutninsk * The
Opioid Epidemic * OWU at 175 * Pawpaws * Ragweed Season *

Retention Ponds * Roadkill * Robocalls * Self-Driving Cars * Sharing
Economy * Shoplifting * Simply Living * Sinkholes * Space Corps *
Body Tattoos * Trailer Living * Underground Delaware * Venezuela

[8/1/17]