

Community Matters

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

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**Send info, articles, questions & comments to
delawarecommunitymatters@gmail.com**

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Constitution of the State of Ohio (Article 1, § 11): "Every citizen may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of the right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech, or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good intentions, and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted."

CALENDAR OF LOCAL EVENTS

OSU Lecture on Leadership (10/1)

Dave Kaufman, CEO of Encova Insurance, will discuss "Integrated Leadership" on Tues., Oct. 1 (7:30 pm) in the Benes Rooms of OWU's HWCC Campus Center, 40 Rowland Ave. He is also the founder of Future Possibilities, a nonprofit that delivers a life-skills coaching program to inner-city youth in Columbus. Kaufman's talk represents the 2019 Milligan Leaders in Business Lecture.



International Walk-to-School Day (10/2)

The Walk-or-Bike-to-School Day is Wed., Oct. 2. In the U.S., over 4,000 schools have signed up. In 2018, Delaware City Schools also participated in the event. However, there is no plan in place to repeat the event in 2019. Two Olentangy schools (Oak Creek & Tyler Run) have registered for the event, but none within the City of Delaware. Regardless, consider walking or biking to school to do your part in the fight against climate change and to stay healthy and fit yourself not only on Oct. 2, but as often as possible. It also helps to decrease traffic congestion around schools.

Outdoor Sirens Test (10/2)

Delaware County tests its outdoor sirens at noon on the first Wednesday of each month. This is a planned, routine test, and there is no reason to be concerned.

Asbury Organ Recital (10/3)

Asbury United Methodist Church at 55 W. Lincoln Ave. is once again hosting a First Thursday Noontime Organ Recital Series. The concert on Thurs., Oct. 3 (12:15-12:45 pm) will be performed by Jonathan Casady, assistant organist at St. Paul the Apostle Catholic Church in Westerville. Beverages are provided, and tables will be set for those who wish to eat lunch during the recital. Free & open to the public. – The full season program is posted on the church's website, under "Music Ministry."

Groundbreaking for New Senior Apartments (10/3)

OWU celebrates the groundbreaking for new senior residential living at S. Liberty St., outside on the Welch & Thompson Lawns on Thurs., Oct. 3 (4:15-5:45 pm). (Bashford Hall Lounge is the rain site.) There will be speeches, a performance by the a cappella group Pitch Black, cupcakes, and lawn games.

Turning Point Celebrates 40th Anniversary in Marion (10/4)

Turning Point, headquartered in Marion, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. An open house with tours, a ceremony, and picnic food will be held Fri., Oct. 4 (11 am – 2 pm) at 330 Barks Rd. W. in Marion. Speeches will start at 12:30 pm and include the mayor of Marion, special guests, and proclamations from elected officials. There will also be refreshments. Parking is off-site with shuttle service to the facility. Please RSVP to rsvp@turningpoint6.org.



2019 Ohio Gourd Show (10/4-6)

The 57th Annual Ohio Gourd Show will take place Oct. 4 (12-5 pm), Oct. 5 (9 am – 5 pm), and Oct. 6 (10 am – 4 pm) at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, 236 Pennsylvania Ave. This year's theme is "Take Me Out to the Gourd Show." The expo brings together artists, craftspeople, and gourd enthusiasts who compete in over 100 craft & horticultural classes. There will be vendors, demonstrations, kids activities, free make-and-take events, entertainment, and more. Admission is \$5 for adults (\$7 for weekend); children 12 and under are free. To learn more, visit www.ohiogourdsociety.com.

First Friday (Oct. 4)

The October First Friday celebration (Fri., Oct. 4, 6-9 pm) will feature the unveiling and dedication of the Rutherford B. Hayes statue (6:30 pm), fire trucks and firefighters, and a free 30-min. yoga class with Dan Nevins (7:30 pm). Rutherford B. Hayes, the 19th American president (1877-1881), was born in Delaware. Organizers are expecting a big crowd. Multiple speakers will make remarks, including the U.S. ambassador from Paraguay. For the occasion, local judge David Hejmanowski has composed a "Fanfare for the 19th President." In addition, fire-fighting equipment will be on display for children to explore, and city firefighters will be on hand to present fire-extinguisher demonstrations. Oct. 6-12 is Fire Prevention Week in Delaware, by the way.

Before the unveiling of the RBH statue at 6:30 pm, there will be an informal reception with light refreshments at William Street United Methodist Church at 28 W. William St. from 5-6 pm.



Blessing of the Animals (10/4)

Animals are part of God's creation, too. Following the unveiling of the new Rutherford B. Hayes statue, there will be a public observance of the Blessing of the Animals, the annual international commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi's love for all creatures. The ceremony will be conducted by Rev. David Kendall-Sperry, rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church at 45 W. Winter St. If you bring your animal to St. Peter's tent on First Friday in Downtown Delaware, he will perform a brief administration of blessings free of charge. Rev. Kendall-Sperry says, "as stewards of the Earth we are charged by God with the care and preservation of God's creations here."

OWU Performs "The Country House" (10/4-6) – \$

"The Country House" is a play by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Donald Margulies that is intended for mature audiences. It will be performed at OWU Oct. 4 (8 pm), Oct. 5 (8 pm), and Oct. 6 (2 pm) on the Main Stage of Chappellear Drama Center, 45 Rowland Ave. More than 40 OWU students are participating in the production, which is directed by Dr. Elane Denny. Tickets are \$10 for general admission, \$5 for seniors, OWU faculty & non-OWU students. Admission is free for OWU students with a valid student ID.

Community Picnic at Eastside Mission Church (10/5)

The Eastside Mission Church at 32 Joy Ave. is hosting its annual Community Picnic on Sat., Oct. 5 (11:30 – 2:30 pm). The free picnic includes food, games, and a visit from area first responders.

YMCA "Color Run" (10/5) – \$

The YMCA Family Fun "Color Run" (formerly "Pumpkin Run") and Sweet Feat Walk Event is a special event held Sat., Oct. 5 (2-5 pm) at Mingo Park. The run / walk starts at 5 pm. Pre-registration is \$10 (kids), \$25 (adults), and \$40 (families). Add \$5 for each category on the day of the event. All proceeds go toward the Healthy Weight & Your Child program of the Delaware YMCA.



Arena Fair Theatre Performs "Animal Crackers" (10/5-6 + 11-13) – \$

Arena Fair Theatre's next production is "Animal Crackers," a 1920s musical (and film) that starred the Marx Brothers. Performance dates are Oct. 5-6 and 11-13 at Asbury United Methodist Church, 55 W. Lincoln Ave. Watch Judge David Hejmanowski as Capt. Spaulding, who skewers people in high places and dances & performs pratfalls. Evening shows are at 7:30 pm, Sunday shows at 2 pm. For specifics and tickets (\$15), follow Arena Fair Theatre on Facebook or visit www.arenafair.com. Get your tickets at www.arenafair.com/eventbrite.

CROP Hunger Walk (10/6) – \$

The 2019 Delaware CROP Hunger Walk is planned for 2 pm on Sun., Oct. 6. Registration begins at 1:30 pm at OWU's HWCC Campus Center. Thousands of communities in the U.S. and around the world participate in the annual hunger walks, organized by the Church World Service (CWS). Proceeds of the fundraiser benefit local, national, and international organizations that deal with food insecurity.

Symphonic Wind Ensemble Concert (10/6)

The fall concert of OWU's Symphonic Wind Ensemble, entitled "Music for Those Who March and Dance to Different Beats," will take place Sun., Oct. 6 (3:15 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. OWU faculty member Dr. Richard Edwards is the conductor. The ensemble will perform works by Wagner, Sousa, Grainger, Hindemith, Morton Gould, and OWU graduate Nicole Piuanno. Free & open to the public.

"This Is Us" Celebration at Boardman Arts Park (10/6)

The community is invited to a celebration called "This Is Us" at Boardman Arts Park (154 W. William St.) on Sun., Oct. 6 (5-7 pm).

The event is organized by First Presbyterian Church and includes some 20 local partners, incl. Sustainable Delaware Ohio, Citizens' Climate Lobby, One People, Laundry Love, Sweet Adelines, Alcohol Anonymous, Master Gardeners, Family Promise, Jacob's Way, etc. Activities includes pumpkin painting, a climbing wall, and games. Food and drinks are provided. This is a celebratory event; no one will try to convince you to join the church.

Voter Registration Deadline (10/7)

Election season is upon us. The voter registration deadline for the Nov. 5 elections is Mon., Oct. 7 (9 pm). Early / absentee voting begins Tues., Oct. 8. You may register to vote if you are a citizen of the U.S.; if you are at least 18 years old on or before the general election; if you have been a resident of Ohio for at least 30 days immediately before the election in which you want to vote; if you are not incarcerated for a felony conviction; if you have not been declared incompetent for voting purposes; and if you have not been permanently disenfranchised for violations of election laws. Registration locations include any Board of Election, any Ohio BMV location, public libraries, the Health District, and many more. Find your precinct, polling location, and sample ballot at www.delawareboe.org.

"On the Brink" Documentary at the Strand (10/7) – \$

"On the Brink: A Central District Story of History, Hope, and Determination" is a documentary by Dr. Jeffrey Shulman and Steven Fong about gentrification and the displacement of African-Americans in Seattle, Washington. The Strand Theatre at 28 E. Winter St. will show the film on Mon., Oct. 7 (8 pm). Runtime is 1 hr. The director and producer, Dr. Jeff Shulman, will be in attendance and lead a question-answer session after the film. General admission is \$7, \$6 for students & educators with ID, and \$5 for seniors. – Although Delaware is a small Midwestern city, it too is beginning to be affected by the positive and negative impact of gentrification, so this documentary comes at a fortuitous time. View a 3-minute trailer at www.onthebrinkmovie.com.

Health & Wellness Expo (10/9)

SourcePoint at 800 Cheshire Rd., in cooperation with Ohio Health, is inviting residents to a Health & Wellness Expo on Wed., Oct. 9 (3-6 pm). There will be a wide variety of free screenings, activities, and more for adults age 55+. Admission is free, and registration is not required.

Dedication of Elmer Curry Sign on S. Liberty St. (10/9)

Delaware-born Educator Elmer W. B. Curry (1871-1930), once an OWU student, was the first African-American school teacher in the city. He later moved to Urbana, Ohio where he founded his own educational institute, intended as a "Tuskegee of the North." Thanks to the efforts of Benny Shoults and others, the City of Delaware has installed and will unveil two honorary "Elmer Curry Way" signs along London Rd. A ceremony will be held Wed., Oct. 9 (5:30 pm) at the southwest corner of S. Sandusky St. and London Rd. Parking at Walgreen's is fine.

One People Meets (10/10)

One People Delaware will meet Thurs., Oct. 10 (7 pm) at First Presbyterian Church, 73 W. William St. (rear entrance). One People has recently updated its mission statement, which now reads: "To promote building bridges of respect across cultural lines by embracing ethnicity and diversity. Delaware = One People."

MORPC Summit on Sustainability (10/11) – \$

The 2019 MORPC Summit on Sustainability will be held Fr., Oct. 11 (8 am – 4 pm) at Hilton Columbus Downtown, 401 N. High St., in Columbus. This year's theme is "Shaping Resilient Communities."

DKMM Special Collection Event (10/12)

The fourth and last Special Collection Event of the Delaware Knox Marion Morrow (DKMM) Solid Waste District is on Sat., Oct. 12 (9 am – 1 pm) at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, 236 Pennsylvania Ave. Electronics and tires are accepted. Fees apply for tires (\$4 each

for 19" and under) and televisions (\$20 each). For additional details, visit www.dkmm.org.

Oakland's Fall Festival (10/12-13)

Oakland Nurseries at 25 Kilbourne Rd., off Rt. 36/37 E., has its 39th Annual Fall Festival on Oct. 12-13. Activities at the Delaware outlet include a haunted village, balloon artist, caricature artist, farm petting zoo, reptile petting zoo, face painting, mechanical spider, axe throwing, music, food-truck concessions, and all-you-can-carry pumpkins. All store items are 33-50% off. For more info, visit www.oaklandnursery.com.

Halloween Drag Show at Clancey's Pub (10/12) – \$

Community Matters normally does not promote events involving bars and alcohol, but we are making an exception for this one. On Sat., Oct. 12 (starting 6 pm), Clancey's Pub at 40 S. Sandusky St. will feature a Halloween Drag Show with host Selena T. West, famous Columbus drag queen and entertainer. Admission is \$8 and includes costume-contest prizes and DJ Diesel. The fundraiser benefits the new Delaware Ohio Pride organization, which is planning a Delaware Pride day for June 2020.

Miller's Annual Fall Festival (10/13)

The annual Fall Festival at Miller's Country Gardens (2488 State Rt. 37 W.) is Sun., Oct. 13. (The website does not mention a starting and ending time.)

Oak Grove Cemetery Walk (10/13) – \$

The Delaware County Historical Society presents the 2019 Oak Grove Cemetery Walk on Sun., Oct. 13. Guided tours start every 20 min., beginning at 1 pm. Participants will meet costumed interpreters and reenactors who will share their stories with them. The tour lasts about 2 hours and requires comfortable shoes. Tickets are \$20, \$10 for DCHS members, and \$5 for children ages 6-17. Please buy your ticket online by visiting www.delawareohiohistory.org or by calling. Some walk-ins are accepted for an additional surcharge of \$5.

Full Moon (10/13)

Free & open to the public. ☺

Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples Day (10/14)

The second Monday in October is celebrated not as Columbus Day by a growing number of cities and states around the nation, but rather as Indigenous Peoples Day. Not only were American Indians here long before Christopher Columbus, the explorer and others in his wake brought oppression, slavery, disease, and death to millions of them. For indigenous nations, celebrating Columbus Day is tantamount to celebrating genocide.

League of Women Voters (10/14) – \$

The League of Women Voters of Delaware County is inviting interested residents (both sexes) to their first Monthly Dinner Out. The event will be held Mon., Oct. 14 (6 pm) at the Saigon Asian Bistro, 50 Neverland Dr., Lewis Center (just north of Highbanks Metro Park). Come socialize and get to know the LWV. Please RSVP to marci.jem@gmail.com.

Olentangy Watershed Forum (10/15)

The 16th annual Olentangy Watershed Forum will take place Tues., Oct. 15 in Merrick Hall Rm. 301 in the Ohio Wesleyan Univ. Parking in Selby Stadium Lot (45 S. Henry St.) is recommended. Registration starts at 8 am, presentations are scheduled from 9 am – 3:30 pm. Sponsors include the City of Delaware, OWU, Del-Co, Preservation Parks, and FLOW. The forum, which includes lunch, is free, but registration is required. To register, please contact Erin Gibson at egibson@delcower.com or call 740-548-7746, ext. 2221.

You Must Be 21 to Buy Tobacco Products (10/17)

Ohio has raised the age for the legal sale of tobacco and vaping products from 18 to 21 years, effective Oct. 17.

Poetry Reading at OWU (10/17)

Two OWU alumnae, Amy Lemmon '85 and Marwa Helal '03, will do a poetry reading on Thurs., Oct. 17 (12 pm) in the Bayley Room (2nd floor) of Beeghly Library on the OWU campus. Lemmon is the author of several books of poetry, incl. "The Miracles." Helal is the author of "Invasive Species." Both writers are currently SUNY faculty members. Free & open to the public.

Regional Business Expo at Waldo (10/17)

The 3rd Annual Regional Business Expo will be held Thurs., Oct. 17 (4-7 pm) at the All Occasions Banquet & Catering facility, located at 6989 Waldo-Delaware Rd. in Waldo, off US 23 N. This is a joint venture of Delaware Area and Marion Area Chambers of Commerce. The deadline to reserve a booth is Oct. 9. [At press time, we did not know if there is an entry fee or not.]

Delaware County Democratic Party (10/17)

The Central Committee of the Delaware County Democratic Party meets next on Thurs., Oct. 17 (7:30 pm) in Willis Education Center (2nd floor), 74 W. William St. The meetings are open to the public.

Caring for Mom and Dad (10/17)

Willow Brook Christian Village at Delaware Run (100 Delaware Crossing W., off W. William St.) is hosting an evening dedicated to "Caring for Mom and Dad" on Thurs., Oct. 17 (5:30-6:30 pm). Hors d'oeuvres are served. At 7 pm, national eldercare expert Barbara McVicker will discuss the 5 stages of caregiving and challenges. Please register for the free event through www.mysourcepoint.org.

OWU Music Faculty Recital (10/18)

Music faculty at OWU will hold a gala recital featuring Nancy Gamso (clarinet), Larry Griffin (trumpet), and Jeremy Smith (trombone) on Fri., Oct. 18 (7 pm) in the Jemison Auditorium inside Sanborn Hall, 23 Elizabeth Str. Free & open to the public.

Great GeekFest Returns (10/19)

The Delaware Main Library's annual GeekFest returns Sat., Oct. 19 (10 am – 5 pm). The event is open for all ages and includes a "cosplay" (costume play) contest with fantastic costumes on display all day. The gaming area and arcade have been expanded to accommodate the crowds, and new table games were added. In addition, there will be vendors, artists, photo ops, a children's area, and food trucks. To learn more, visit www.delawarelibrary.org/ggf.

"Fright Night" at Boardman Arts Park (10/19) – \$

Boardman Arts Park at 154 W. William St. is inviting adults to a "Fright Night" with a haunted walk, costume contest, tarot reading, beer, and food trucks on Sat., Oct. 19 (6:30-10:30 pm). The Columbus band RadioTramps (www.radiotramps.com) will perform from 7-10 pm. Tickets are \$8 (& \$1.87 online fee), \$10 at the door. Beer is \$6/pint. Visit www.boardmanartspark.org for details and tickets.

"Love Letters" at OWU (10/19)

"Love Letters" is a bittersweet epistolary play by A. R. Gurney that premiered in 1988. It will be performed by Hollywood actors Wendie Malick (an OWU alumna who graduated in 1972) and Dan Lauria on Sat., Oct. 19 (8 pm) on the Main Stage inside OWU's Chappelle Drama Center, 45 Rowland Ave. Tickets are \$30 per person.

Craft Fest (10/20)

The 4th annual Craft Fest will take place Sun., Oct. 20 (10 am – 4 pm) at the Delaware County Fairgrounds, 236 Pennsylvania Ave. Over 100 different local crafters and artists will be there. Admission is free, but food donations for Safe Harbor and feminine-hygiene products for Turning Point are accepted.

Pride Yoga (10/20)

Delaware Ohio Pride, a new group dedicated to the fair treatment of the LGBTQ+ community, is hosting a Pride Yoga event on Sun., Oct. 20 (2 pm) in Blue Limestone Park. The fundraiser is for

people age 18+. Delaware Ohio Pride is planning a Delaware Pride day for June 2020.

Sarah Moore Spaghetti Dinner (10/21) – \$

The annual Sarah Moore Spaghetti Dinner, hosted by Sarah Moore Service Board, is Mon., Oct. 21 (4:30-7:30 pm) at the Eagles Lodge #376 at 127 E. William St.

"An Hour and Change" at MTSO (10/23)

Students at MTSO have invited social-justice and ecology organizations from the Delaware area to visit their campus. Called "An Hour and Change," each group will have approx. 5 minutes to share their mission and to inform people how to get involved. Participating groups should bring brochures and sign-up material. The current list of represented nonprofits includes Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL), Interfaith Power & Light, Seminary Hill Farm, Stratford Ecological Center, Sustainable Delaware Ohio (SDO), and more. The event will be held in the Walnut Room inside Dewire Residence Hall on the MTSO campus, off US 23 S. on Wed., Oct. 23 (6:30-7:30 pm).

Delaware County GOP Meets (10/24)

The Central Committee of the Delaware County Republican Party meets Thurs., Oct. 24 (7-8 pm) at Northgate Church, 7097 State Rt. (Rt. 36/37 E.), across from Cracker Barrel near the I-71 intersection.

OWU Civil War Lecture (10/24)

Prof. Joseph T. Glatthaar '78 from the Univ. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill will give this year's Richard W. Smith Lecture in Civil War History. He will discuss "Generalship and Army Culture: A Study of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia and the Union Army of the Potomac" on Thurs., Oct. 24 (7:30 pm) in the Benes Rooms of OWU's HWCC Campus Center, 40 Rowland Ave. Glatthaar is the author of several books on military history. Free & open to the public.

Arthur Miller's "The Crucible" (10/25-26) – \$

Hayes High School students have been working hard to rehearse Arthur Miller's play "The Crucible," set during the Salem witch trials in the 17th century. Fear-mongering, hysteria, scapegoating, and so-called witch hunts occur even today, so the 1953 drama has lost none of its original potency. The 20-member cast will perform the fall play on Oct. 25-26 (7:30 pm) in the Hayes High School Auditorium, 289 Euclid Ave. Tickets are \$9 (\$6 for students and senior citizens) and can be purchased at the door only.

Delaware Kennel Club Dog Show (10/26-27)

The Delaware Kennel Club Dog Show is Oct. 26-27, 8 am – 4 pm. Last year's show featured nearly 1,000 dogs representing 135 breeds. The event at the Delaware County Fairgrounds (236 Pennsylvania Ave.) is free; parking is \$5.

Make a Difference Day (10/26)

The 2019 Make a Difference Day is Sat., Oct. 26. Volunteers meet at Camp Lazarus on US 23 S. from 8-9 am, then go out around Delaware County from 9 am – 12 pm to perform various outdoor chores. Vehicles return for a light lunch at noon. Connections Volunteer Center at 39 W. Winter St. coordinates the activities. Visit <https://connectionsvolunteercenter.org> for more info.

Farmer's Market Ends (10/26)

Sadly, Farmer's Market ends for the season on Sat., Oct. 26 (9 am – noon). Delaware does not have a year-round indoor farmer's market, but the idea has been suggested.

Old Jail Tours (10/26)

Members of the Delaware County Historical Society will take visitors on guided tours through Delaware's Old Jail at 20 W. Central Ave. on Sat., Oct. 26 (2-4 pm). Tours are free & open to the public, start every 15 min., and last about 30 min. There is a suggested donation of \$5 per person. Eventbrite pre-registration is suggested. The historic building is not handicap-accessible.

Halloween Party at Mingo Park (10/26)

Delaware's & the YMCA's annual Halloween Party is Sat., Oct. 26 (4 pm). The fun event will be held at Mingo Park and includes live music (Three of a Kind), treats, a bonfire, one free pumpkin for kids 11 & under (limit of 500), a costume contest (come dressed in your finest ghoulish gear!), and more. (A run / walk is no longer included.) Free & open to the public.



Central Ohio Symphony (10/26) – \$

The Central Ohio Symphony will open its 41st season with a concert on Sat., Oct. 26 (7:30 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall on the OWU campus, 61 S. Sandusky St. On the program are 3 works: Christopher Weait's "Divertimento for Strings," Peter I. Tchaikovsky's "Piano Concerto No. 1," and Jean Sibelius "Symphony No. 2." The soloist is Israeli-born pianist Dror Biran. Tchaikovsky and Sibelius need no introduction, but contemporary British-born musician Weait is probably unknown to many. He was the Symphony's conductor in the 1990s, and the orchestra is performing his "Divertimento for Strings" in honor of his 80th birthday earlier this year. Chris Weait plans to be in attendance for the celebration. General admission is \$25. Seniors pay \$20. Additional discounts apply.

Know Your Candidates Event (10/27)

Following 2 similar events in Powell and Westerville, the Delaware County Democratic Party (DCDP) is hosting a "Know Your Candidate" event for the Delaware area on Sun., Oct. 27 (2-4 pm). The venue is Gallant Woods Park, 2151 Buttermilk Rd., north of Delaware. Some food will be provided, but attendees are asked to bring a dish and/or a beverage to share. For planning purposes, the DCDP would appreciate an RSVP through its Facebook page.

High School Choral Art Concert (10/27)

Conducted by OWU faculty member Dr. Jason Hiester, the High School Choral Art Concert will perform on Sun., Oct. 27 (3:15 pm) in Gray Chapel inside OWU's University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. Free & open to the public.

Citizens' Climate Lobby (10/29)

The Delaware chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby will have a special meeting on Tues., Oct. 29 (7 pm), open to all who are interested in hearing about CCL and/or joining the chapter. Elli Sparks, an energetic national CCL leader, will host the meeting at Andrews House, 29 W. Winter St. Free & open to the public.

Ross Art Museum: "Figuring Our Humanity" (10/31 – 2/9)

"Figuring Our Humanity" is a new art exhibit at OWU's Ross Art Museum. It features 2-dimensional prints and 3-dimensional ceramic works by many national and international artists. The show is curated by Kristina Bogdanov and Tammy Wallace. Special events are planned in conjunction with the exhibition in November, incl. an opening reception on Nov. 3 (2 pm); a curator tour and panel discussion on Nov. 5 (6:30 pm); and a series of figure-drawing classes. More details can be found in the next issue of "Community Matters."

Beggar's Night / Halloween (10/31)

Halloween is Thurs., Oct. 31 this year, and Beggar's Night will be take place the same night from 6-8 pm. Please drive and walk carefully because the crowded streets will be dark.

Retirement Celebration for Jon Powers (11/1)

OWU Chaplain Jon Powers has served the community for 31 years. A celebration will be held Fri., Nov. 1 (3-5 pm) in Merrick 301 on the OWU Campus. The building is handicap-accessible and has an elevator. Remarks regarding his enduring impact and legacy will start at 4 pm. Eventbrite registration is not required, but encouraged.

CITY OF DELAWARE

City of Delaware in October

City Council meets Mon., Oct. 14 + 28 (7 pm). Council must adopt the 2020-24 CIP plan no later than Oct. 14 and will then start to build next year's budget. Board and commission meetings include: Planning Commission (Wed., Oct. 2, 6:30 pm), Sister City Advisory Board (Tues., Oct. 8, 6 pm), Civil Service Commission (Wed., Oct. 9, 3 pm), Airport Commission (Thurs., Oct. 17, 6:30 pm), Parking & Safety Committee (Mon., Oct. 21, 6 pm), Shade Tree Commission (Tues., Oct. 22, 6:30 pm), and Historic Preservation Commission (Wed., Oct. 23, 6:30 pm). All meetings take place in City Hall (2nd floor), 1 S. Sandusky St. The Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) on Oct. 9 has been cancelled. It is possible for additional meetings to be canceled due to a lack of agenda items or lack of quorum, so always check the City's website (www.delawareohio.net).

Delaware a "Great Neighborhood"

The American Planning Association (APA) has recognized Downtown Delaware as one of only 4 "Great Neighborhoods" on its annual "Great Places in America" list. The association applauded how all stakeholders came together to build a district that combines historic elements with modern vibrancy. The City of Delaware has occasionally been at odds with its own Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) and ignored its standards and recommendations, but clearly HPC must be credited for being part of the success story. – Delaware will celebrate its "Great Neighborhoods" status with a short program on Thurs., Oct. 17 (12 pm) on the patio at 2 S. Sandusky St., across from City Hall. Following the program, there will be a walking tour of Downtown Delaware.

Second Ward Elections

There are three contenders for Delaware's Second Ward: **Lisa Keller, Mike Rush, and Stephen Tackett.**

Lisa Keller, the 45-year-old incumbent since 2008, has represented her constituents effectively over the years. At City Council meetings, she is often the only one who asks critical, probing questions. At SWCI's last Community Unity Festival, on 9/28, she showed up and spoke, signaling that she sees herself as a spokesperson for *all* residents in her district, including underserved population groups. She has been told, and is aware, that income inequality and poverty is an issue in Delaware that must be addressed. Lisa Keller's official Facebook page is www.facebook.com/councilwomanlisakeller.

Mike Rush, 51 and a Vertiv employee, serves on the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board and the Steering Committee for the city's next Comprehensive Plan. He is also a member of the local Masonic Lodge. He seems to be a well-informed and well-meaning person, but so far people who live in the Second Ward have seen little campaign activity from him other than vague statements on Facebook. He has mentioned the need for a fresh perspective, but it is not publicly known what his vision is. When someone asked him on his Facebook page where his campaign funds came from and if he had received any money from developers, he rather rudely refused to answer. That was not a confidence-raising response. Residents have since learned that Ron Sabatino from the Building Industry Association (BIA) held a fundraiser on his behalf back in August. To learn more about him, visit www.facebook.com/friendsofmikerush.

According to flyers that Stephen Tackett has distributed, he is a young Delaware resident (born in 1994) who graduated from Hayes High School and then joined the Air Force. He currently works as a bioenvironmental engineer at Rickenbacker Air Force Base in Columbus. Giving people a voice in City Hall is one of his top priorities. He is bothered by the fact that City Council routinely skips the usual three public hearings, thus limiting the ability of people to learn about an issue and comment on it. He also says that natural and recreational spaces need to be a high priority. In addition, he wants to see smarter growth and development, not unchecked urban sprawl and traffic congestion. More info on him can be found at www.fb.com/tackettforcouncil. Voters can also find him at First Friday events.

Fourth Ward Candidates Forum

A Fourth Ward candidates forum took place on Sept. 26, arranged by the Northwest Neighborhood Association. Both **Drew Farrell and Sarah JanTausch** were invited to the Andrews House to describe their vision in front of a significant crowd. Farrell works as an educator in the public-school system, JanTausch is currently employed full-time as Development Director in charge of fundraising for Turning Point after some years in the Kasich administration. Both candidates are well-educated and articulate, likeable and electable individuals who have a good understanding of Delaware. They love the community and their Northwest neighborhood and want to preserve its unique character. Both have an extensive history of volunteering. They stressed that they intend to be accessible and good listeners. Their well-calibrated responses were civil, apolitical, and uncontroversial. The audience had to read the fine print between the lines to find out points of divergence. JanTausch emphasized her love for private-public partnerships, a more conservative talking point. Farrell pointed at the good work the Columbus City Council was doing, suggesting a more liberal leaning.

It was interesting that the attendees would bring up the issue of racial segregation, poverty, lack of affordable housing, and homelessness in Delaware. The feeling was expressed that in the past the City of Delaware has largely ignored the problem and done little to acknowledge and support underserved communities. Both Farrell and JanTausch were unfazed by the question that was posed to them. They are aware of the challenges and are open to discuss possible solutions. JanTausch revealed that her husband is Guatemalan and that she went through the "Bridges Out of Poverty" program. Farrell stated that he definitely sees a role for City Council to make Delaware a more inclusive community as far as the housing sector is concerned and in general.

It will be up to the voters in the Fourth Ward to decide who their representative will be. It won't be an easy choice because both candidates are highly qualified individuals who will be an asset on City Council.

Takeaways from the 9/30 CIP Work Session

On Sept. 30, City Council held the second of two Capital Improvement Program (CIP) sessions. Here are some quick takeaways. Police Chief Bruce Pijanowski said that his department is "not moving forward with body cameras" at this point. The cameras are not cheap, plus there the ancillary costs of storing and managing them and associated personnel expenses. In addition, on-body police cameras come with a host of policy issues, incl. privacy concerns. – Police Chief John Donahue reported that within the foreseeable future Delaware will need a 5th fire station on the east side, especially if the area expands as quickly as it has in the past. – Councilwoman Lisa Keller moved to add a new traffic signal to the corner of W. William St. and Carson Farms Blvd. to the CIP. The motion was supported by City staff and approved unanimously. The target date is 2021, and the total cost would be \$250,000. – MCI is currently laying the groundwork for high-speed 5G technology throughout Central Ohio. It would allow customers to download entire movies within 1 second. In downtown Delaware, that would necessitate digging up the sidewalks to lay new fiber cables. – Lastly, a local resident asked City Council to consider making future overpasses more bat-friendly by installing bat boxes or allowing the animals, by making small adjustments to the beams, to roost in the crevices. He noted that bats consume a lot of mosquitoes and other insects, making them natural allies in the fight against West Nile and other communicable diseases. Many cities have taken this step and are happy with it.

No Public Defender for Indigent Offenders

State and federal laws require the City of Delaware 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. The Constitution's Sixth Amendment also states that in all criminal prosecutions the accused "shall (...) have the assistance of counsel for his defense." The City of Delaware, on the other hand, claims that "defendants typically are not entitled to a public defender when charged under the City's Codified Ordinances" (City Council agenda for 9/23/19 meeting, p. 66). The text provides no rationale for this interpretation, but City Attorney Darren Shulman has stated in the past that misdemeanors do not rise to the level where a public defender is warranted. However, even a

cursory look at Delaware's Codified Ordinances indicates that numerous misdemeanors can result in "the potential loss of liberty." Besides, state and federal law does not seem to distinguish between misdemeanors and felonies. The agreement for indigent defense services between the City of Delaware and Delaware County is silent on this point.

In violation of state and federal law, the City of Delaware has not provided legal counsel for indigent persons charged with a violation of a city ordinance in many years, if ever. That creates a 2-tier system. People able to hire a private lawyer have a better chance of being acquitted or treated mildly than those unable to afford a lawyer. This is an injustice that needs to be addressed and corrected. All indigent persons are entitled to a public defender if and when Delaware's Codified Ordinances indicate that "loss of liberty" (i.e., "jail") is a possible outcome. Either that or the ordinances should be revised to clearly state that no misdemeanor committed within municipal limits shall ever result in loss of liberty.

City Council Not Interested in Expanding Historic Preservation Boundaries

Some of Delaware's oldest and most beautiful architecture is on the city's east side, on the other shore of the Olentangy River. The Historic Preservation Commission has been discussing the possible expansion of Delaware's historic-preservation district to include some of these unique buildings from the 19th century. Members are worried that as developers are beginning to discover the east side and move in, there is insufficient protection for these historic structures. Why were they left out of Delaware's Historic District to begin with? It seems like a good idea to pass a resolution or an ordinance that mandates that all private or public city buildings erected before 1850 or 1900 should undergo an assessment whether or not they have irretrievable historical value before being demolished or substantially altered. Surely, HPC would be happy to assist with such an evaluation, which would cost the City nothing.

Under "City Manager's Report," on Sept. 23 City staff (David Efland) and Tom Homan recommended to City Council "to not entertain" the idea of an expansion of Delaware's historic district. Among the arguments was that the next Comprehensive Plan takes precedence. City Council quickly agreed and went on record to say there was "no interest." City Council made its decision without listening to any of HPC's thoughts on the matter. Neither Efland nor Homan made any attempt to convey HPC's legitimate concerns. There was no joint work session, as was originally suggested. Apparently the City sees no "overall benefit" in the proposal. That is regrettable and suggests that the City is more interested in siding with potential developers than with its very own appointed Historic Preservation Commission. The Comprehensive Plan emphasizes "development and revitalization," not conservation. As a matter of principle, all sides of an issue should be studied before making a decision.

Delaware Community Chorus Is 50

On Sept. 29, the Delaware Community Chorus, a mixed choir, celebrated its 50th anniversary. Upcoming events include the 50th Winter Concert on Sun., Dec. 8 (3 pm) at Powell United Methodist Church, 825 E. Olentangy St., Powell, Ohio. The Spring Concert will be Sun., May 3, 2020, also at PUMC. To learn more about DCC, visit www.delawarechorus.com.



LLS Food Pantry Now at Willis Education Center

The Lutheran Social Services Delaware County Food Pantry has relocated from 73 London Rd. to Willis Education Center, 74 W. William St. (1st floor). Hours are Tues., 4-6 pm, and Wed., 12-2 pm. Food orders can be made through an online ordering system at www.lssfoodpantries.org or by calling the help desk at 877-577-6325. – The move to Willis makes sense in many ways, but it is our understanding that some vulnerable people in the Second Ward are not happy that the LLS Food Pantry is now less accessible to them.

Perhaps the communication between the groups could have been better.

SourcePoint Is Looking for Volunteers

SourcePoint at 800 Cheshire Rd. is always looking for volunteers to help with food preparation, Meals on Wheels, medical transportation, caregiver relief companions, activity leaders, and more. New Volunteer Orientation will take place Mon., Oct. 7, Nov. 4, and Dec. 9 (10:45 am – noon). Walk-ins are welcome. Learn more at www.mysourcepoint.org/volunteer.

Tobacco-Cessation Program at Grady

A free 6-week tobacco-cessation program will be offered at Grady Memorial Hospital from Oct. 9 through Nov. 13. The course, taught by Matthew Munroe and Doug Clark, will be held every Wednesday night at 6 pm. Call 740-615-2518 to register.

Home Energy Assistance

The Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program runs from Nov. 1 through March 31. It provides assistance to low-income households that are at risk of being disconnected from the energy grid or have less than 25% of bulk fuel remaining in their tank. Ohioans must have a gross income at or below 175% of the federal poverty guidelines to qualify. Additional info can be found at www.energyhelp.ohio.gov. To submit an application, contact Bridges Community Action Partnership at 740-369-3184.



Delaware May Soon Get Cricket Field

It was announced at the last meeting of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board that a cricket field is in the works at Veterans Park near the YMCA. Cricket is a very popular sport in the British Commonwealth, and immigrants from Pakistan and other countries do not currently have their own field in Delaware. According to Parks & Recreation Director Ted Miller, there are currently 10 or 11 youth and adult teams in the area that are desperately looking for a play area. The City is committed to building at least one cricket field south of the Veterans Park Splash Pad, near the current railroad track.

In Defense of the Delaware County District Library

The DCDL has a great mission statement: "The Delaware County District Library serves as the public information provider for our community, using traditional and innovative technology to encourage curiosity, free inquiry, and lifelong learning in a friendly environment." Any Ohio resident, by the way, is eligible to obtain a library card, regardless of one's citizenship or immigration status.

Unfortunately, there are a handful of ultra-right voices in the community who do not fancy the notion of critical thinking and free inquiry at all. They have accused highly educated, professional teachers and librarians of manipulating and brainwashing children when discussing banned books, racial bias, or LGBT issues. The aims of these "anarchists," they say, is "to tear down the values, beliefs, and traditions that once gave strength and stability to our families and communities." In the past, these same voices have gone so far as to suggest the forced removal of such individuals who "infiltrate our libraries, schools, and universities." Such purges have indeed occurred in fascist and socialist dictatorships in the past, often leading to mass incarceration and worse. Unfortunately, it seems there are some misguided folks in our midst who wish to restore the grand old totalitarian times of Lenin and Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin and eradicate any trace of individuality, originality, and creativity. However, societies that stifle curiosity, free inquiry, and lifelong learning have no future. True educators, as opposed to fake ones, therefore promote literacy, value curiosity, and encourage critical thinking. The Delaware County District Library as well as our local schools and universities deserve to be praised for what they do. They are doing a phenomenal job under difficult circumstances.

Coming Up at the Strand Theatre 2019/20

- Joker, Oct. 4
- The Addams Family, Oct. 11
- Gemini Man, Oct. 11
- Maleficent: Mistress of Evil, Oct. 18
- Terminator: Dark Fate, Nov. 1
- Frozen II, Nov. 22
- Jumanji: The Next Level, Dec. 13
- Birds of Prey, Feb. 7
- Sonic the Hedgehog, Feb. 14
- Mulan (2020), March 27
- Pixar's "Soul," June 19
- Ghostbusters (2020), July 10
- Morbius, July 31

Elmer W. B. Curry Exhibit Now in SWCI

African-American teacher Elmer W. B. Curry (1871-1930) was born in Delaware and went on to found the Curry Institute in Urbana, Ohio, an educational institution that has been called "the Tuskegee of the North." Curator Benny Shoults from the Delaware County Historical Society, in cooperation with others, has assembled an exhibition of Curry's life and work that was at display at the DCHS's museum earlier this year. Some of the exhibition is now housed in a separate meeting room at the Second Ward Community Initiative (SWCI) at 55 Ross St. for permanent display. Curry was born and raised in that area of Delaware. To honor him, the City of Delaware recently installed two "Elmer W. B. Curry Way" street signs along London Rd. The display is accessible during the SWCI's events and program hours.



Two New Murals in Delaware

Delaware has two new outdoor murals, one at SWCI (depicted above) and one at Andrews House. They were installed by California artist Brett Cook and his assistants in September. (A third one may be installed at Common Ground on the city's east side at a later point.) The year-long process was chronicled in previous issues of "Community Matters."



Why Is the Ambassador of Paraguay Coming to Delaware, Ohio?

The U.S. ambassador of Paraguay, Manuel María Cácares Cardozo, will be in Delaware on Oct. 4 to witness the unveiling of the new statue of Rutherford B. Hayes. Why did he travel all that way from Washington, D.C.? After the bloody and devastating Paraguayan War (1864-70), the 19th American president arbitrated a border dispute between Argentina and Paraguay. In 1878, he awarded the disputed Chaco territory to Paraguay, an act that made him a national hero and an immortal figure in that country to this day. There are statues, there is an annual celebration, and streets, schools, and even

a city are named after him. Ironically, Rutherford B. Hayes is better remembered in Paraguay than in the U.S. where he is considered to be a relatively unremarkable president. – The Paraguayan city of Villa Hayes (pronounced a-yes) already has a sister city in Ohio – Fremont. However, economic cooperation and educational exchanges may be possible in the future after the ambassador's visit.

Please Support Your Local Newspaper

Newspapers are in trouble across the nation. Print editions are shrinking and staff is being laid off, hurting both local and investigative journalism. Many outlets have merged or disappeared altogether. In Central Ohio, less than 10% of the residents seem to read the Columbus Dispatch and the Delaware Gazette. The Gazette's print edition is down in the 2,500 / 3,000 range, which is ridiculous in a city of 40,000 and a county of 200,000. The Dispatch currently has a circulation between 65,000 and 80,000, in a state with a population of 11 million. Of course, circulation does not equal "readership." Multiple people may read the same copy, and there are also the growing e-editions. However, the fact remains that newspapers no longer have the resources and coverage, cachet and prestige they once enjoyed.

If you value local reporting, we urge you to support the Delaware Gazette, which is published daily from Tuesday through Saturday. Within the city, carriers will bring it to your doorstep; out in the country it will be mailed to you. There is no substitute for newspapers – neither Facebook, Nextdoor, nor Twitter. Social media have little or no depth, and substantive coverage is impossible. Even NPR and BBC – highly valued venues – do not come close to replacing traditional newsprint. It is the staff of newspapers that does the real work of journalism. Everyone else just steals from them, without paying them a penny. It is newspapers that shine the brightest light on things and speak truth to power. Democracy may die without them, in darkness.

Southwind Ozzi Wins Little Brown Jug

3-year-old Southwind Ozzi won the 74th Little Brown Jug at the Delaware County Fair on Sept. 19, ahead of Fast N First and American Mercury. The colt's driver was Brian Sear who also won the 2013 title with Vegas Vacation. Southwind Ozzi now has \$771,263 in career earnings.

New Book on Horse Race Announcer Roger Huston

There is a new book out on race announcer Roger Huston, known for his booming voice. A native of Xenia, Ohio, he is now 77. During his long career, he called more than 178,000 races and covered at least 144 tracks in 19 states and 8 countries. The book, written by Victoria M. Howard, is entitled "The Voice: The Unparalleled Life of Roger Huston" (AuthorHouse 2019, 294 pp.) and is available through amazon.com both as a paperback and a hardcover.

OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

President Jones Hints at Grim News

At the first faculty meeting of the academic year, OWU President Rock Jones discussed the "challenging times" that higher education is facing, especially small liberal-arts colleges such as Ohio Wesleyan. Sister institutions such as Bucknell, DePauw, Oberlin, Otterbein, and Wittenberg show enrollment shortages, financial deficits, faculty layoffs, and early retirements. In fact, 64% of U.S. colleges and universities did not reach their admission objectives this year. OWU is entering the 2019/20 fiscal year with a \$2.6 million deficit. If the trajectory continues, the deficit will be \$5.1 million by 2020/21. Luckily for OWU, an additional 1% draw from the institution's endowment will yield about \$2.3 million in extra funds annually, but clearly the current trend is unsustainable.

Dr. Jones minced no words when he spoke of the need to reorganize and realign the institution. "Further reductions" are expected by the end of the academic year, following a comprehensive review of academic departments and programs as well as administrative offices. At the end of the process, OWU will be a "smaller" institution with fewer faculty. Gone is the president's confidence and optimism that he exuded in the past. Without going

into any specifics, Dr. Jones did pledge, however, that departures resulting from retrenchment would be handled "humanely."

OWU VP Says "More Colleges Will Likely Close"

Stefanie D. Niles, OWU's Vice President for Enrollment and Communications, states in a short piece written for the Chronicle of Higher Education that "more colleges will likely close." Niles is the immediate past-president of the National Association for College Admission Counseling and as such keenly aware of the current higher-education landscape. She writes that as a result of demographic changes fewer students will go to college for at least another decade. "As a result, colleges will likely continue to close. There are simply too many colleges competing for a dwindling pool of individuals." There are, of course, additional reasons why higher education finds itself in a crisis, among them stagnant family incomes at a time when tuition is skyrocketing. Who will close and who will prosper? "The institutions that will thrive are those that are creatively addressing their pipeline and working to identify who, beyond the traditional pool of students, might be available to them." Niles provides no examples, but examples might be minority and international students, immigrants, older adults and retirees, prison inmates, partnerships with corporate America, and other groups. Colleges may also try new things such as adding online courses offerings. However, Niles is pessimistic that any of these changes will translate into real, sustainable success. "Unless higher education confronts head-on the challenges of increasing costs and a shrinking pipeline, less financially institutions on the lower end of the prestige spectrum will continue to falter, and even disappear."

Luckily, OWU has a strong faculty and a relatively healthy endowment. It is not "on the lower end of the prestige spectrum." However, it is clear that even colleges and universities with good reputations and some renown are not immune to the enormous external competition and pressure. There is anecdotal evidence that other institutions have lured away accepted and admitted OWU students with higher financial aid packages. In many instances the "discount rate" (the difference between the sticker price and the actual tuition amount after need-based and merit-based aid is factored in) is in the neighborhood of 70% – an unsustainable practice. Some faculty remember a time when a discount rate above 50% was considered catastrophic.

Provost Chuck Stinemetz Will Step Down

The churn at Ohio Wesleyan Univ. continues. After the institution lost Lauri Strimkovsky, Vice President for Finance & Administration / Treasurer, last month, Provost Chuck Stinemetz has announced that the time has come for him to step down as Provost and Vice President of the Academic Division at the end of the 2019/20 academic year. He will join the OWU faculty in a full-time capacity as a professor in the Dept. of Botany-Microbiology.

Every faculty member or administrator who leaves has valid personal reasons. However, the exodus in the last couple of years is making people wonder if there is a systemic problem at OWU. Most notably, the enrollment keeps decreasing. The 2019/20 budget was conservatively based on 450 new students. However, only 414 freshmen and transfer students enrolled (8% fewer than anticipated), necessitating detailed analysis of spending and staffing trying to achieve a balanced budget. In fact, multiple projections and assumptions rested on wishful thinking rather than reality. Despite all efforts, the 2019/20 budget currently shows a \$2.5 million deficit. Needless to say, it is unlikely that the Board of Trustees will approve any faculty-salary increases under these circumstances. The state and national demographics are not looking good either. Across the U.S., many of the smaller colleges have already closed or merged. Vice presidents such as Chuck Stinemetz and Lauri Strimkovsky are people who are thoroughly familiar with the trends in higher education. It could well be the case that they are anticipating an extended period of contraction and austerity measures, incl. financial exigency, which could result in the elimination of certain academic departments / programs and tenure lines. Neither Stinemetz nor Strimkovsky would want to be in a position where they have to make difficult decisions and painful cuts that involve the positions of good friends and colleagues. It is likely that this was at least part of their calculus.

The university administration is likely to say that this interpretation and scenario is premature and extreme. And indeed, it

could well be the case that a different economy, another White House administration, or a \$1 billion donation will change things somewhat. The university is also hoping that its \$60 million residential renewal will translate into better student recruitment and retention. However, if the current trajectory continues it is inescapable that something has to yield.

Given the fact that leadership people are headed for the door, more than ever responsibility for the operation rests on the shoulders of one individual – President Rock Jones. He is believed to enjoy the support of the Board of Trustees. After all, he handpicked many of them. However, at one point the Board will have to ask: What is our fiduciary responsibility? Does the president have the right team? And is he the right man to lead the institution out the slump?

COACHE Survey

The results of a survey on faculty career satisfaction are now available online on the Provost's website. It is interesting, however, that not one member of the administration and not one committee chair has said a public word about the outcome of the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey. Other institutions have shared and discussed their results, formed task forces, and organized retreats and forums. At OWU, silence reigns. Faculty were encouraged to dig in and explore the results privately and by themselves. They were also asked to look at the survey as "a tool for improvement" rather than a report card. Translation: the results are abysmal, reflecting profound job dissatisfaction and low morale. Problems that faculty complain about in their comments include the high workload, stagnant compensation, deteriorating student quality, and lack of strategic leadership. Quite a few responses include the phrase "a new president." There is also evidence of an intergenerational conflict and feelings of disenfranchisement.

The problem is that faculty are busy with teaching, research, and service during the academic year. Not many have the option and opportunity to spend hours navigating through an unwieldy mass of complex data and to make sense of them because they already work 12 hours day, incl. weekends. It seems that the password-protected survey results are meant to remain hidden. The COACHE should be regarded as a wake-up call, but it appears that Rip Van Winkle will sleep on a little while longer. "Community Matters" will endeavor to learn more about the COACHE survey results and share the main outcomes in the next issue. It seems that no one else is willing to take on the task.

Wittenberg University Cuts Faculty Positions

Wittenberg Univ. in Springfield, Ohio is in many respects similar to OWU. Founded in 1845, it is a private liberal arts college of about 1,800 students sitting in a small Midwestern city of no particular distinction. Wittenberg, like OWU, is now struggling mightily with enrollment and budgetary issues. In a recent memo, Mike Frandsen, Wittenberg's president since 2017, says in order to achieve cost savings a "realignment" of the institution is necessary to ensure future success. Going beyond normal attrition, 8 instructors were notified by the university that their teaching appointments would not be renewed beyond 2019/20. Six of the instructors do not have tenure, but two of the professors held tenure-track positions and were in process of becoming tenured. Frandsen did not indicate in his memo which individuals and departments or programs would be affected by the cuts. The good news is that at this point no tenured faculty members are being laid off, which would be possible under financial-exigency rules. In addition to not renewing 8 faculty contracts, Wittenberg will review everything this year – university assets, staff positions, employee benefits, athletic offerings, the academic curriculum, outsourced services, institutional contracts, and more. – OWU has one advantage that Wittenberg does not have – it has an endowment that is almost twice as big. There is now talk about drawing an additional 1% from the endowment, which roughly translates into \$2.3 million for the operating budget, almost enough to cover the \$2.5 million deficit anticipated for the 2019/20 fiscal year. Like Wittenberg, however, OWU has to face the uncomfortable reality that higher education is being impacted by ever greater challenges and on a collision course with reality.

Amy McClure Wins National Award

Retired education professor Dr. Amy McClure is being honored by the International Literacy Association (ILA) with the 2019 Jerry Johns Outstanding Teacher Educator in Reading Award. She will be honored at an Oct. 12 ceremony in New Orleans. During her 40-year career, McClure focused on K-12 education and literature appropriate for this age group. She was active in state and national organizations and, in 2012/13, was elected to the Newbery Medal Committee that annually selects the most outstanding children's book published in a particular year. She has also written or co-written a number of books herself, most recently "Teaching Children's Literature in an Era of Standards." McClure lives in Dublin with her husband, Randy McClure. Both are alumni of OWU.

Amy Butcher Works on "Mothertrucker" Book & Film

OWU has announced that OWU English professor Amy Butcher is working on a book and movie that features Joy Wiebe, a long-distance Alaskan truck driver who delivered fuel to Prudhoe Bay oil. Wiebe died in August 2018 in a highway crash, leaving behind a husband and 3 children, but not before she had told Butcher her life story. The resulting book, "Mothertrucker," won't be published anytime soon, but there are already conversations about making it into a movie written & directed by Jill Soloway and starring Julianne Moore. The film will be produced by Brad Weston from the Makeready studio.

Hispanic Film Festival

OWU is once again having a Hispanic Film Festival. The October movies include "Birdboy" (Thurs., Oct. 3), "Everybody Knows" (Tues., Oct. 22), "Everybody Leaves" (Tues., Oct. 29), "The Death of Pinochet" (Tues., Nov. 5), and "Truman" (Tues., Nov. 12). The films, in Spanish with English subtitles, are shown at 6:30 pm in Room 312 of the Corns Building, 78 S. Sandusky St. Free & open to the public.

"New Vistas in Astronomy" Series

Perkins Observatory continues its "New Vistas in Astronomy" series. Dr. Chris Orban (OSU) will discuss "Georges Lemaitre: The Holy Father of the Big Bang" on Oct. 10; Dr. Don Terndrup (OSU) will present "A Century of Eclipsing Binary Stars" on Nov. 14; and Dr. Mike Stamatikos (OSU) will explain "Black Holes: Monsters of the Cosmos" on Dec. 12. Lectures are on Thursdays at 8 pm. Tickets are \$10 per night or \$80 for the year. Perkins Observatory is located on US 23 S., just south of MTSO. The website is www.owu.edu/perkins.

Support Group for Depression & Anxiety

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, has created a new support group for young adults (ages 18-25) suffering from depression and anxiety. The group will meet on the following Tuesdays on the OWU campus: Oct. 1, 15, and 29 (5-6:30 pm), HWCC Campus Center, Rm. 229. – NAMI is located at 814 Bowtown Rd. on Delaware's east side and offers a wide spectrum of services to people with mental challenges and their families. The website is <https://namiofdel-mor.org>.

Liquor-Law Violations at OWU

The Columbus Dispatch reported on Oct. 2 that there were 84 reported liquor-law violations at OWU in 2018, up from 42 in 2017. There were also 14 burglaries at OWU, up from 8 in 2017. Under the federal Clery Act, colleges & universities must report crime statistics annually by Oct. 1 of each year.

OWU's full "Annual Security and Fire Safety Report," 102 pages in length and publicly available, covers not only the main campus in Delaware, but also Perkins Observatory and the New York Arts Program. It includes statistics for the past 3 years concerning crimes and fires. It also includes institutional policies concerning campus safety and security, followed by actual statistics on campus crime (pp. 57-102).

From the report it is clear that OWU is a safe campus where diversity is valued and hate crimes and rape do practically not exist. There are also relatively few incidences of theft & burglary and drug violations, although it must be noted that the statistics only capture "reported" and "reportable" offenses. OWU's biggest problem seems to be alcohol consumption by underage students. There were 84

referrals for liquor-law violations, twice the number in 2017. If you walk through campus on a Sunday morning, for instance, you see the evidence: empty beer cans everywhere as well as whiskey and vodka bottles. You can quickly fill a recycling container or two. What students do *off-campus* is likewise not captured in the statistics. There is way too much drinking going on at colleges and universities across the nation. OWU is no exception in this respect. The institution says it has prevention and cessation programs in place, but how effective are they? No doubt there is more than can be done to change the culture. For example, students look to faculty members as role models, but to our knowledge no faculty member has ever been enlisted in the fight against binge drinking on campus.

A Storm-Drain Net in the Delaware Run

A storm-drain net was recently installed in the Delaware Run, on the east side of S. Sandusky St. The 18-foot-wide metal grid and the net are designed to catch trash, recyclables, and organic material to keep the creek and the Olentangy River clear of debris.

This is an example of a positive project with unintended negative consequences. The project was not fully vetted and would have benefitted from additional input from more stakeholders. There is a lot of wildlife in the Delaware Run for whom the storm-drain net installed on Sept. 9 now poses an impenetrable and insurmountable barrier. Ducks, blue herons, and other birds can fly over the 4-foot structure if they have to, and small minnows can get through the metal grid on both sides of the net. But larger fish, snakes, turtles, and the like are now stuck on one side or the other. Migration has become impossible. Where will the snapping turtles now lay their eggs in early summer? Did anyone even think of them? Also, during rain events many animals may get trapped in the net, suffocate, and die. The net will be under water for days if it rains hard enough or after a snow melt. In addition, during the cold season the Delaware Run is often frozen and the net will be buried under the ice. It may not be emptied for weeks. In addition, the barrier is ideal for tree limbs and other debris to get caught and form solid logjams, perhaps forcing the water over the banks and flooding the tunnel underneath Sandusky Street. Lastly, the new net is not capable of eliminating or even reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, chlorine, medications, raw sewage, E. coli, and other pollutants. That's wishful thinking. – Delaware has removed its low-head dams in the Olentangy River in recent years, ensuring better water quality and greater biodiversity. Why are we now installing new barriers?

Celebration of Life for David Staley

A Celebration of Life service will be held for former OWU Professor of Mathematics David Staley on Sun., Oct. 20th (2-4 pm) in Merrick 301 on the OWU campus. The building is handicap-accessible and has an elevator. In addition to his academic career, Dave Staley also held leadership positions within the Delaware County Democratic Party and was an active athlete who competed in state and national triathlons.

In Praise of Turkey Vultures

by Tom Wolber

I do not know for sure where they overwinter, but at one point in early spring (end of February, beginning of March) they are suddenly back, once again sailing gracefully and effortlessly high in the sky. They are magnificent flyers, rarely flapping their wings. Instead, they glide for hours using thermals, soaring in the air as if gravity had no meaning for them.

On the ground, they are considerably less graceful. In fact, they are awkward and not even pretty. Their naked red heads are ugly, they hop around clumsily, and they eat gross stuff such as roadkill. They appear to be social creatures, though. I see them gather, in threes and fours, around dead deer, or I see a pair pick at the carcass of a large catfish. Often, a whole colony roosts in a dead tree, spreading their wings to dry and to warm them, or they glide in groups of ten or twenty hundreds of feet up.

They are not shy of people, it seems. I have seen them fly twenty feet above my head, closely observing me and the family dog. If a car disturbs their carrion-eating, they reluctantly take off, only to land again a few seconds afterwards. They like to fly over and near woods

and seem to like the lakeshore, but frequently they are also near roads and houses. In fact, I am theorizing that something like a symbiosis has emerged between humans and these vultures. People, roads, and cars mean roadkill and thus food for the turkey buzzards. We humans, in turn, rely on the birds to remove cadavers that otherwise would be a breeding ground for all kinds of diseases.

Only a couple of weeks ago, there was a dead opossum lying in the middle of Park Ave. I removed it and placed it under a nearby tree. It did not take the vultures long to discover the body; they do have sharp eyesight and a keen sense of smell. Only two days later, the opossum was gone, eaten by at least 4 buzzards simultaneously in the middle of the OWU campus in broad daylight. The people and cars did not seem to faze them much. They are adaptive animals indeed. Some people even consider them to be a nuisance.

A dozen or so years ago, I discovered a turkey vulture nest within the City of Delaware, on the west side of Cobblestone Street. It was a new development then. The first houses were going up, but most of the area was still fields of corn and soybeans. And there were woods nearby with plenty of rabbits and deer. The nest was in a dead, hollow tree stump, partially covered and about three feet in diameter. At first, I did not realize what it was. Small bones and skulls surrounded the stump, the wood and soil was black and foul-smelling, and the macabre scene was somewhat reminiscent of a horror movie. The place must have been in use for several years already. But one day, when I walked by, a giant buzzard took off noisily and unexpectedly, with a wingspan of six feet, and startled me to death. I realized then what this was – a turkey vulture den. It also explained the foul smell. Turkey vultures urinate on their legs, and they feed their young through regurgitation. Standing on my toes, I was able to look inside. Two eggs were lying on the bare surface. A few weeks later, there was one ugly, shapeless, whitish chick that sometimes hissed at me when I checked its progress. I did not keep a diary then, but it seemed the whole process, from egg to chick to leaving the nest, took about 3 to 4 months. Then, one day, the den was empty and never used again. I hope the bird made it, without being eaten by a raccoon or a fox.

Turkey vultures are not hunted. I have never heard of anyone eating their meat. Even farmers who indiscriminately shoot at anything and everything seem to leave them alone. Protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, they are abundant in Ohio and elsewhere. Graceful in the sky, awkward on the ground, they are part of the permanent landscape. I am happy to see them come in the spring for it means the end of winter, and I am sad to see them leave in the fall because it means months of frost and snow and ice.

DELAWARE COUNTY & CENTRAL OHIO



Fourth Democratic Debate at Otterbein University

The 4th Democratic Presidential Debate will be held Tues., Oct. 15 (8 pm) at Otterbein University's Rike Center in Westerville. The selection signals the importance that Ohio, still a swing state, plays in the next presidential election. Although 12 candidates have qualified (incl. Tulsi Gabbard & Tom Steyer), the debate will be held on 1 night only. Somewhat ironically, the only candidate from Ohio, Youngstown-area Congressman Tim Ryan, will not be on stage. Bernie Sanders, who just experienced a heart attack at age 78 and had 2 stents inserted, is expected to be back in the action on Oct. 15. CNN anchors Erin Burnett and Anderson Cooper and New York Times national editor Marc Lacey will be the moderators. The Rike Center is an athletic facility that seats 3,100. This is also a welcome opportunity for Otterbein Univ. to show off its campus, says President John Comerford. The next-door Clements Recreation Center will be dedicated to news coverage. About 1,000 reporters are expected to

be in attendance. Columbus residents should obviously expect some disruptions at the airport, at I-270, and in Westerville.

Underscoring the importance of Ohio during the 2020 elections, Democratic National Committee Chairman Tom Perez has confirmed that he will speak at the party's state dinner on Sun., Oct. 13, at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Tickets are \$250; \$500 includes dinner plus admission to a "sponsor's reception."

OSU's Fundraising Goal: \$4.5 Billion

OSU hopes to raise \$4.5 billion in the coming years, the university's largest fundraising goal in history. It also hopes to attract the support of 1 million unique supporters, another unprecedented target. The quiet phase of the campaign began in 2016. So far, almost 500,000 donors have contributed more than \$1.7 billion. There is no deadline to close the campaign; it is expected to go on for another 4 to 5 years at least. The campaign emphasizes 3 core areas: student success based on outstanding education; research and discovery (incl. artistic advances); and "healthy, vibrant communities."

The initiative comes at a time when OSU's reputation has taken significant hits, incl. the case of Dr. Richard Strauss who is accused of having abused hundreds of male athletes while OSU looked the other way. OSU has acknowledged that there have been between 1,400 and 1,500 reported instances of sexual abuse tied to Dr. Strauss. No institution has ever reported a number that high. OSU is facing mega lawsuits and/or settlements, which may help explain the unprecedented fundraising goal. There is also the public perception that OSU's is first and foremost a sports conglomerate, with academics being an afterthought. OSU President Michael Drake says the campaign is rooted in the idea of championing human potential, but to outsiders it looks as if OSU is first and foremost all about big money, not little people. Until the institution gets its priorities in order, many people may not wish to contribute anything to the sesquicentennial fundraising campaign.

OSU Coaches Make Obscene Amounts of Money

In America, sports coaches make obscene amounts of money. Although they contribute relatively little value to society, they are often better paid than teachers, engineers, or doctors with M.A. or Ph.D. degrees. OSU is a good example of an institution where athletic prowess seems to enjoy a higher priority than intellectual accomplishments. The Columbus Dispatch reported on 9/12 that OSU men's basketball assistant coach Ryan Pedon has landed a \$105,000 raise in his latest contract, which pays him a base salary of \$500,000. Fellow assistant Terry Johnson has a new contract that pays him \$325,000 annually. Newly hired assistant Jake Diebler's starting base is \$250,000. In addition, coaches receive generous monthly vehicle stipends, plenty of other perks, and bonuses. Earlier this year (3/12), the Columbus Dispatch reported that OSU's 10 assistant coaches are making a combined \$7.245 million in 2019, an average of \$724,500 per person. Some head coaches and directors make millions every year. Ryan Day, Urban Meyer's successor, rakes in \$4.5 million this year. Given this prioritization of games and circuses over academic rigor and research at OSU and countless other institutions, it is little wonder that the U.S. is in decline.

OSU Cannot Trademark the Word "The"

OSU cannot trademark the word "the," as in "The Ohio State University." On Sept. 11, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office decreed that the word "the" is merely decorative or ornamental and does not have any innate value and source-identifying significance. OSU's request to have the word patented was thus denied, but the institution does have six months to review its options and respond to the ruling. – As of fall 2018, OSU had about 150 patents in 17 countries. Its merchandise covers everything from clothing & sportswear, hats & shoes, backpacks & purses, wallets & checkbooks, watches & clocks, cups & mugs, flags & banners, lawn & garden ornaments, and even car accessories. Income from copyrighted trademarks is such big business for OSU that at times its significance eclipses academics.

Grove City Is the Site for BIA's Next Parade of Home

Grove City's Beulah Park is the location for the BIA's 2020 Parade of Homes. Builders and dates have not yet been announced

by the Building Industry Association of Central Ohio. The first phase of the development on the site of the former Beulah Park racetrack will include 264 apartments, 104 ranch-style homes, 80 townhouses, and 94 assisted-living units. Plans eventually call for up to 972 apartments, condos, and homes.

Hims and Hers Coming to Columbus

Men's health and wellness company Hims is coming to Central Ohio. Hims provides prescriptions, products, devices, and medical advice to men that include skin, hair, and sex. There is also a division for women, called Hers. The San Francisco-based company plans to employ between 500 and 1,000 jobs at its mail-order pharmacy, fulfillment center, and customer-support center. The hiring process will start in 2020. A location has not yet been determined, but one of the options is Delaware County. The Ohio Tax Credit Authority has approved tax incentives for the project with an estimated value of \$32 million.

Classical Music at WOSU

At age 66 and after 35 years with WOSU (89.7 FM and 101.1 FM), Boyce Lancaster is ready to retire. Many people will miss his companionable voice. However, Christopher Purdy is standing by to replace him after Sept. 20. Lancaster's successor is another very familiar voice to area listeners. He has hosted "Music in Mid-Ohio," "Musica Sacra," Opera and More," "Classical 101 by Request," and the Columbus Symphony live broadcasts. – It was important to the radio station to replace Lancaster with a familiar voice. Some people have never forgotten and forgiven WOSU for abruptly and without explanation cancelling certain popular radio and television shows a dozen years ago and have not donated any money since. For example, even though Linda Ebright's film-music show was discontinued in 2004, we still sorely miss it.

Leslie Wexner's Ties to Jeffrey Epstein

Leslie H. Wexner, the chairman and CEO of Victoria's Secret parent L Brands, is reported to be the richest man in Ohio. He has recently come under renewed scrutiny in conjunction with sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, who earlier this year committed suicide while in jail. The two men had a decades-long close business relationship that involved the transfer of real estate and of \$47 million to the YLK Foundation by Wexner's wife, Abigail. On Sept. 10, Wexner spoke at the annual investor day at the Hilton at Easton. He condemned Epstein's behavior depraved and abhorrent, but also emphasized that this happened "a long time ago" and that he severed the relationship nearly 12 years ago. Wexner, 82, denied that he was ever aware of the egregious and illegal activities Exner was charged with. However, not everyone is satisfied with Wexner's explanation, now or in the past. Many questions remain unanswered. The full story has yet to be told.

Allegations of Misconduct against Alessandro Siciliani

The Music Director of the Opera Project Columbus (OPC), conductor and composer Alessandro Siciliani, has been accused by multiple people of professional misconduct during the time Verdi's "Rigoletto" was produced last June. The allegations include inappropriate and abusive behavior against women (Title IX violations), insulting behavior against men and institutions, and irrational outbursts. A professional musician has also launched a complaint against the latest show at the Lincoln Theatre, calling it "the most unprofessional concert I've ever seen." As a direct result of the situation, several people have resigned from their positions at the Opera Project Columbus, which – by the way – has no affiliation with Opera Columbus: then Artistic Administrator Adam Cioffari, Chorus Master Christopher Dent, and then Executive Director Zeke Rettman. "Rigoletto" Director A. Scott Parry has also indicated that he would no longer be involved with the company as long as Siciliani remains at the helm. However, Siciliani has a good friend and patron in George Skestos, a major donor. The OPC Board has launched an internal investigation into the matter, but has so far not removed him from his position.

Maestro Alessandro Siciliani, born in 1952, served as conductor of the Columbus Symphony Orchestra from 1992 to 2004 and was popular among musicians and his audience. However, it sounds like he is currently going through a difficult phase in his life. If

the allegations of unprofessionalism against him are true, he needs to be suspended and replaced. If fundraising is OPC's major concern, as opposed to ethical integrity, then the company must be reminded that negative publicity is never good for an organization.

Innovative Organics Recycling Is Leaving Columbus

Innovative Organics Recycling at 2121 Integrity Dr. South is leaving Columbus and Franklin County. After numerous complaints about and investigations into a persisting odor problem, Columbus Public Health had enough and demanded on Sept. 13 that owner George Hunyadi correct a string of violations, stop accepting materials at the site, and move all existing material off-site. In addition, landlord Chris Elliott said he will not renew Hunyadi's lease even if his tenant wanted to renew it. In a surprise announcement at yet another public meeting about the controversial company and the stench it emits, Hunyadi stated that he will take the entire business out of the county by January when his lease expires. He is hoping to continue the business elsewhere even though he doesn't know where just yet.

His associate, Ray Leard, has at times tried to drum up business in Delaware, but it has been quiet for a while. It seems the overwhelmed company collected more incoming material than it could possibly handle, hence their haphazard ways to reach out to the City of Delaware. There were also some serious trust issues involved, both in Columbus and locally. A few years ago the company asked for a significant contract without having much of a track record. The City turned them down.

Bob Dylan Coming to Columbus on Nov. 4

Bob Dylan, now 78, is probably best known for his involvement in the civil-rights and anti-war movements in the 1960s. In 2016, he won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Bob Dylan and his band are coming to Columbus on Mon., Nov. 4 to perform in the Wexner Mershon Auditorium (capacity: nearly 2,500) on the OSU campus at 8 pm. Tickets are between \$185 and \$296, according to the website accessed. They went on sale Sept. 20 and may be sold out by now. To learn more, visit www.bobdylan.com.

STATE OF OHIO

House Bill 242

The Ohio Constitution (Article XVIII, § 7) guarantees that municipalities may "exercise ... all powers of local self-government." Unfortunately, however, the principle of home rule is being systematically undermined by legislators beholden to special interests. In Ohio, local governments have been prevented from enacting ordinances that reduce or prohibit a minimum wage, paid sick leave, gun control, or fracking. Ten states now prohibit local regulation of e-cigarettes. House Bill 242 is another example where state lawmakers are trying to take power away from cities. The bill would squash the ability of local governments to curb wasteful plastic bags and food containers that are used only once and then discarded. HB 242 would prohibit not only bans of such items but also the imposition of any kind of fees. It is clear that many Ohio legislators do not have the interest of their constituencies at heart. Instead, they seem to serve the big industries – the fossil-fuel industry, pharmaceutical companies, agribusiness, and gun manufacturers.

1 Million Ohioans Lack Access to High-Speed Internet

A newly released report notes that about 1 million Ohio residents lack high-speed internet service, mostly in underserved Appalachia. The study mentions various reasons, among them outdated tax codes; missed funding opportunities; incorrect maps; and bureaucratic red tape. The key reason, however, seems to be that broadband access for all Ohioans was not a priority for the Kasich administration, although legislators were certainly aware of it. As a result, nothing was done, holding the state back in the 20th century. Ohio's new governor, Mike DeWine, on the other hand, seems ready to develop a new statewide broadband focus as part of the state's overall infrastructure strategy. Robust internet access is key to the future, and it is high time that Ohio moves forward in this regard.

While at it, the governor should consider modernizing the state in other respects as well, incl. rules that protect the LGBT community. Without such protections in place, many companies will not even consider coming to Ohio. Others will have difficulties recruiting and retaining quality employees. It is a disgrace that employers and landlords can still openly and with impunity discriminate against gay, lesbian, and trans people.

Billions in Tax Breaks for Companies in Ohio

According to publicly available data from Washington, D.C.-based Good Jobs First (www.goodjobsfirst.org), companies operating in Ohio have received at least \$4.4 billion in tax breaks since 1983. Ten companies received more than \$100 million, incl. Fiat Chrysler, Goodyear, and General Electric. The actual amount is likely to be much higher because many of the more than 10,000 awards tracked by Good Jobs First had no monetary value associated with them. – In return for tax abatements and other incentives, companies typically promise to make capital improvements; retain and/or create jobs; and increase payroll and income tax. In many instances, such programs make sense. However, Good Jobs First notes that tax incentives are mostly unnecessary because those projects would have proceeded regardless. A research analyst with the nonprofit says, her group would like to see fewer corporate subsidies and more instances where tax incentives are provided to companies that build affordable housing, invest in distressed neighborhoods, establish a grocery store in a food desert, or support small or minority businesses.

Ohio Suspends Cryptocurrency

With great fanfare, under then-treasurer Josh Mandel Ohio started to accept Bitcoin to settle tax obligations in 2018. “Years from now,” Mandel said at the time, “we’ll look back and be thankful that we became national leaders when it comes to blockchain technology and using cryptocurrencies to make a payment.” Current Ohio treasurer Robert Sprague has now suspended the use of OhioCrypto.com, after praising it in 2018. According to the Columbus Dispatch, the website has been used for fewer than 10 transactions. More concerning is the fact that Mandel apparently launched the program without the Board of Deposit’s approval. In addition, the contract with the third-party payment processor was not properly bid.

In 2017, the Plain Dealer called Mandel “a bottom feeder” for whom no gutter was too deep and shot too cheap. It fits that he favored Bitcoin, which is used quite a bit in the underworld. There is no legitimate reason why anyone dealing in business in Ohio would need the cryptocurrency. The decision made by Sprague is the correct one.

Murray Energy Corp. Headed toward Default

Several coal companies have gone bankrupt this year already, and Murray Energy Corp. in St. Clairsville, Ohio could be next. The company is financially struggling and has failed to make multiple payments to creditors. Lenders have agreed not to take legal action until Oct. 14 to give the company a bit more time, but it does not look good considering that the coal industry is in a nationwide crisis. Cheaper and cleaner natural gas has replaced coal as the preferred fuel, leaving coal with an energy-generating share of less than 25%. The coal industry is going the way of the dodo, and no amount of political rhetoric from the White House can change the market reality.

Ohio University Suspends 15 Fraternities

Ohio University of Athens has indefinitely suspended 15 fraternities that are part of the Interfraternity Council and is investigating 9 of them. The measure is part of a crackdown on ongoing hazing, which is illegal in Ohio, and the death of a student last year, Collin Wiant. OU does have the reputation of being “a party school,” but the institution has made some effort to improve its negative image. Local service fraternities were not affected by the suspension. Hazing is defined as any act of initiation that causes a substantial risk of physical or mental harm. Many schools struggle with incidents related to hazing, alcohol, and/or drugs. In 2017, OSU suspended all 37 chapters affiliated with the Interfraternity Council. In April of this year, the Univ. of Buffalo did the same after the hazing death of a pledge. To improve the campus culture, some schools have taken the extra step and banned fraternities and eliminated Greek

Life forever. – In our view, students should attend colleges and universities to work hard, receive a solid education, and launch their careers. In too many cases, however, social activities (incl. drinking and fraternities) and sports seem to have the top priority.

“Ohio Off the Beaten Path”

Another edition of “Ohio Off the Beaten Path,” written by Jackie Sheckler Finch, was published earlier this year (Globe Pequot, 14th ed. 2019, \$17.95). Whether you are a resident or a visitor, the illustrated guidebook celebrates all things Ohio and helps you find hidden treasures such as unusual landmarks & museums, beautiful state & national parks, annual fairs & festivals, and botanical & zoological gardens. We have used the delightful book in the past to plan trips and will do so again in the future.

Here is something spooky though. The day after we checked out the book on amazon.com, we started receiving personalized ads for the book on the MSN site, powered by Microsoft News (Apple). The same thing happened again the next day and several times since. We did not now know that the two platforms, amazon and Apple, were colluding. Whatever information you access online on amazon, Facebook, Google, etc., is stored by the tech giants and can be used for monetizing purposes. The people who say the tech companies have become too omniscient and omnipotent have a point.

Cleveland’s Rock & Roll Hall of Fame

Cleveland’s Rock & Roll Hall of Fame opened its doors in 1995. After founder Ahmet Ertegun died in 2006, co-founder Jann Wenner became the face of the institution. He has now announced that he will step down as chairman on Jan. 1 and be replaced by John Sykes. He will, however, remain as board member. – The Rock & Roll Hall of Fame has received a fair amount of criticism over the decades. Some say that too few women and people of color were admitted. Others have argued that the very existence of a Rock & Roll museum runs counter to the idea that the art form is inherently anarchic and rebellious.

NATION

Beware of the Military-Industrial Complex

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. The cost of one modern heavy bomber is this: a modern brick school in more than 30 cities. It is two electric power plants, each serving a town of 60,000 population. It is two fine, fully equipped hospitals. It is some 50 miles of concrete highway. We pay for a single fighter plane with a half million bushels of wheat. We pay for a single destroyer with new homes that could have housed more than 8,000 people.”

Who spoke these radical words? No doubt it was a crazy un-American socialist, right? Perhaps Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren? Wrong. It was President Dwight D. Eisenhower who said these words early in his presidency (1953). Today, the U.S. spends over \$700 billion on defense annually – more than half of all military spending in the world combined. Every dollar spent on weaponry represents a theft from those who are poor, hungry, and homeless. And the Trump administration is still not satisfied. It wants to cut health care, public education, rent assistance, food stamps, and refugee numbers so that it can expand its military might even further and add a Space Force as a 6th branch.

Trump Dismisses National Security Adviser John Bolton

On Sept. 10, President Trump abruptly dismissed John R. Bolton, his mustachioed national security advisor. Bolton was a known military hawk and warmonger with strong interventionist and regime-change tendencies who often attempted to push his boss into military confrontation. It’s been said that Bolton never met a war he didn’t like. In his announcement, Trump tweeted that he often “disagreed strongly” with Bolton over states such as Afghanistan, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and Venezuela. For all his tough talk, Trump seems to prefer transactional “deals” over a tough foreign policy. There were also multiple disagreements between Bolton and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo. For many, a world without Bolton is a safer place. The

Wall Street Journal, on the other hand, argued “the world is now a more dangerous place” because Bolton’s dismissal and departure supposedly emboldens rogue states.

In the meantime, Trump has named Los Angeles lawyer Robert C. O’Brien as his 4th national security adviser, following the departure of John Bolton. O’Brien, a Mormon, has worked as the State Dept.’s chief hostage negotiator. His views are actually not far apart from those of Bolton. In 2016, he published a book of essays, “While America Slept: Restoring American Leadership to a World in Crisis,” in which he warned against “appeasement and retreat.” Standing next to Trump on 9/18, he reiterated that “peace through strength” remains his philosophy.

Senate Confirms Eugene Scalia as Next Labor Secretary

The next Secretary of Labor, Eugene Scalia, is a man who has a long track record of representing corporations. He replaces Alexander Acosta, who resigned in July. Scalia, 56, is the son of late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia. Democratic leader Chuck Schumer criticized the choice by saying, “Mr. Scalia’s nomination is a slap in the face of labor because Mr. Scalia’s life’s work has been utterly opposed to the mission of the agency to which he is nominated.” Scalia’s appointment fits the pattern established by the Trump administration – to appoint people to the EPA, the Education Dept., the Interior, to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, etc., who have nothing but contempt for the institutions they are supposed to serve and uphold. Their mission is to dismantle and destroy their agencies from within.

Trump Faces Three Challengers

Rep. Mark Sanford (R-South Carolina), and former governor of the state, has joined Joe Walsh and Bill Weld in their attempt to challenge Donald Trump for the Republican presidential nomination. Sanford says, “the Republican Party has lost its way” and no longer represents traditional conservative values. Ironically, South Carolina is one of the states where Republican leaders have voted to scrap their presidential nominating contests in a show of support for Donald Trump. Alaska, Kansas, and Nevada are currently the others that have canceled Republican primaries. Similar action is expected in Arizona. In a statement, Weld said that voting is “the ultimate right of speech in America” and criticized Trump for acting like a “monarch.” On CNN, he reminded his fellow Americans that during the 2016 election campaign Trump lambasted the Democrats for “rigging the system” to get Hillary Clinton elected. Weld added that this is exactly what Trump is doing is now – rigging the system to get himself elected. The one person who could pose a real threat to Trump because of his name recognition and donor relationships, Sen. Mitt Romney, says he is “one hundred percent not running.” That may be true at the moment, but the situation could be radically different next year.

Trump the Meteorologist

At the beginning of September, Hurricane Dorian battered the Bahamas, leaving behind a trail of devastation and dozens of dead bodies. Meteorologists predicted the storm would turn north, hugging the eastern coastline. That’s the normal course Atlantic hurricanes take, and this one was no exception. However, on Sept. 1 President Trump tweeted on Twitter that Dorian would continue to travel west and then hit Alabama hard. It certainly is possible for hurricanes to hit the Florida panhandle and Alabama, and at one early point Alabama was in the mix of scenarios. However, scientific consensus soon ruled out that Alabama had anything to fear from Dorian. A few minutes after Trump’s false warning, the National Weather Service in Birmingham posted that “Alabama will not see any impacts from Dorian. We repeat, no impacts from Hurricane Dorian will be felt across Alabama.”

At that point, President Trump should have left the topic alone and moved on to other subjects. He is no weatherman although it seems that sometimes he thinks he has divine powers. However, Trump being Trump, he was unable to yield even one inch. For 10 or so days, he insisted that he was right and even displayed a crudely hand-altered National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) map that included Alabama. In addition to the deception, his administration put pressure on the NOAA and threatened to fire top administrators if they did not “fix” the agency’s contradiction of the

president. Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney ordered Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross to have NOAA publicly disavow the Birmingham forecasters. The appointed officials were amenable and issued a statement saying that the Birmingham statement had been wrong in their prediction that Alabama would be spared.

If this were a joke, it would be funny, but it is not. Weather forecasting is serious business. Human lives and property damage are at stake. Scientific accuracy is key as is public trust in experts. Trump undermined all that with his fake map. He has no regard for the truth. Everything is about him. The country has come to expect no less from Trump. However, it was shocking to see how quickly NOAA abandoned its mission under pressure, threw its staff under the bus, and sided with Trump’s fake science, despite all evidence to the contrary. The NOAA top administrators should indeed be fired for dereliction of duty, for compromising scientific integrity, and for violating public trust. In addition, Wilbur Ross should resign because the NOAA is under his jurisdiction and it was he who exerted pressure on the agency in a vain attempt to defend Trump. However, his efforts backfired, exposing his boss to more mockery than ever. Given Ross’ ignominious role in the Census-question debate and now in “Sharpigate,” it is our prediction that his days are numbered because he is now more a liability than an asset.

Trump Involved in Another Scandal

The sensitive information was supposedly secret, but it took less than 24 hours for it to spill out. Last summer, a whistleblower in the U.S. intelligence community filed a formal complaint that involved allegedly inappropriate contacts between President Trump and a foreign leader. It was quickly revealed that the leader was the newly elected president of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky. Allegedly the Trump administration, with the assistance of lawyer Rudolph Giuliani, had relentlessly pressured Zelensky to assist with finding damaging information on rival Joseph Biden and his younger son, Hunter Biden, who was doing business with a gas company in Ukraine while his father served as Obama’s vice president. Zelensky seemed amenable and willing to cooperate up to a certain point, but demanded a White House meeting between Trump and himself in exchange and more support for Ukraine’s fight against Russia. To exert maximum pressure, in early July Trump suspended \$250 million in military assistance to Ukraine for weeks. As far as it is known, Ukraine has not opened an investigation and not complied with the White House’s request. If the dramatic allegations are true, then this is another quid-pro-quo case where Trump is mixing personal interests with national foreign policy. To observers, this comes as no surprise. Trump has accepted emoluments from foreign leaders on countless occasions, enriching himself in the process, protecting himself from law enforcement, and harassing perceived adversaries.

It is conceivable that there is some truth to accusations of “inappropriate” behavior, malfeasance, and corruption against Hunter Biden, a former lobbyist for a Ukrainian oil oligarch. He was hired in 2014 while his father was vice president. After all, Joe Biden threatened to withhold \$1 billion of loan guarantees if then-president Petro Poroshenko did not fire Prosecutor General Viktor Shokin who was pursuing a corruption case against Burisma Holdings, the company that employed Hunter Biden. Probing questions about the Bidens’ association with Ukraine and Burisma have been around for years and certainly deserve a full investigation. (Joe Biden denies that he ever spoke to his son, a private citizen, about his overseas business dealings.) However, the underhanded way the Trump administration went about pursuing and proving its claim was completely misguided and has now boomeranged.

Bill de Blasio Ends Presidential Campaign

The field of Democratic presidential candidates is down to 19 after New York mayor Bill de Blasio on Sept. 20 ended his campaign for the 2020 elections. De Blasio, 58, never achieved higher than 1% in national polls, did not qualify for the 3rd round of Democratic debates, and has since accepted the fact that “it’s clearly not my time.” In addition, New Yorkers were reportedly not happy with their absentee mayor who spent little time at City Hall. De Blasio has not yet thrown his support behind any of the other candidates.

Lagging in fundraising and polling, presidential candidate **Cory Booker** has also announced that he might end his run unless donations from supporters surge quickly. His campaign manager,

Addisu Demissie, said in a memo that the call for funds was not a stunt but a genuine and serious call for more support. If by Sept. 30 an additional \$1.7 million is not raised, there may not be a path forward. The senator from New Jersey is a highly intelligent, articulate, and serious politician. It is sad and sobering to hear that someone's chances of being elected may ultimately rest on his or her ability to raise money, not on their intellectual acumen.

Trump Administration Limits Number of Refugees

The United Nations expects the number of climate-change refugees to increase dramatically in the 21st century. The Trump administration, however, is working hard to reduce the number of displaced refugees the U.S. will accept. In Obama's last year in office, a cap was set for 110,000. The total for 2019 was capped at 30,000 refugees. Now Trump is capping it at 18,000 for 2020, an all-time low. Thousands of these spots have already been reserved for Iraqis who worked with the U.S. military and for people persecuted for their religion, meaning that the U.S. is deliberately abandoning countless refugees from potential hot spots around the world. At the core of Trump's crusade is the commitment to keep foreigners out of the U.S., especially non-whites. When the Bahamas were hit by a devastating hurricane in summer, for instance, the Trump administration did not permit any resettlements under the pretext that among the refugees could be "some very bad gang members" and "some very bad drug dealers." The measure will also prevent countless families from reuniting, in many cases keeping mothers, fathers, and their children apart. America, historically a country of refugees and immigrants, is no longer willing to accept the tired and poor, homeless and huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Religious, humanitarian, and resettlement groups reacted harshly. The Rev. John L. McCullough, president of the Church World Service, said: "With one final blow the Trump administration has snuffed out Lady Liberty's torch and ended our nation's legacy of compassion and welcome."

Observers have noted that quite a few U.S. areas and entire states are experiencing population decline. In many instances, it is immigrants who keep the numbers up and the economy going. Without them, agriculture, manufacturing, and other industries would be hurting. Keeping newcomers out leads to economic, social, and cultural decline and entropy.

Strike at General Motors

Almost 50,000 workers at General Motors went on strike as of Mon., Sept 16. The walkout brought to a standstill more than 50 GM factories, parts manufacturers, warehouses, and distribution centers in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. It is the first strike against GM since 2007. Negotiations over a new 4-year contract have not gone well. Both sides remain far apart. Health care is a sticking point as is profit-sharing. Workers are also striking for more job security and better wages. It did not help when GM announced on 9/17 that it stopped all health-care benefits for the striking workers, incl. dental and vision plans. Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown called the tactic "dirty." Given the national focus on health care, GM's latest step may indeed turn into a public-relations disaster for the tone-deaf company. GM made a profit of \$8.1 billion after taxes in 2018, and workers feel that as stakeholders they deserve some respect after years of cut and other sacrifices. GM is losing about \$80 million of profit daily while the strike lasts. Depending on when the strike ends, the total cost could be in the billions. GM stock has dropped about 11% since the walkout began. – As we head into October, the strike continues. Several crucial issues remain unresolved. There is fear that the on-going walkout is beginning to impact the economy as a whole.

Health-Insurance Costs at a Record High

The cost of family health coverage in the U.S. has reached a record high. It now tops \$20,000, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. While employers pay most of the cost for full-time employees (as opposed to part-timers or "contractors"), the average contribution for workers is now \$6,000 for a family plan. In addition, there are co-payments, deductibles, and medications. For many employers and employees this is an expense that is either not affordable or not sustainable. Alternatives include plans that cost more or cover less. Many people have been forced out of the

insurance market altogether. The number of uninsured Americans is once again on the rise.

Illnesses and Deaths Related to Vaping

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported last month that the number of vaping-related illnesses has risen to more than 1,000 in 48 states. Hundreds more cases are expected. At least 19 people have died. The vaping industry maintains that its products are safe. There is a huge black market, and indeed the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has begun to focus on contaminated black-market products. However, at this point physicians are not ruling out anything. There is little or no long-term research on the health effects of vapors produced when e-cigarettes heat a liquid containing nicotine and other substances. E-cigarettes have been on the market since 2007. Juul devices went on sale in 2015, but the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) dragged its feet and permitted underage vaping to reach epidemic proportions.

Juul Makes the Switch

Juul, which controls about 70% of the U.S. e-cigarette market in the U.S., has announced it will stop advertising its devices nationally. It has also sacked its CEO (Kevin Burns) and replaced him with K. C. Crosthwaite. – Juul's move comes at a time when U.S. states have begun to outlaw vaping flavors and Trump has announced he may issue a federal ban on flavored vaping products. The company also said it would refrain from lobbying against such a federal ban. At this point, the very survival of the industry is at stake.

Edward Snowden Publishes Memoir

Former National Security Agency (NSA) contractor Edward Snowden, who still lives in Russia to avoid U.S. prosecution, is perhaps the most famous American whistleblower of all time. He is an award-winning hero, but national-security officials view him as a traitor. Snowden has now published a memoir, "Permanent Record" (Metropolitan Books, 352 pp., \$30), which tells his life story in detail for the first time and how he helped build NSA's system of mass surveillance. The book, out Sept. 17, not only explains the why and how of his actions in 2013. It is also taking a critical look at the world today where authoritarian governments are ascending, investigative journalism is delegitimized, whistleblowers are criminalized, and human rights are ignored. Snowden does not reveal too much about his life in exile, but we know that he has married his friend Lindsay Mills and that they live together in Moscow.

It should come as little surprise that the U.S. government has filed a lawsuit against Snowden. It alleges that he should have given the government an opportunity to review the book in advance and demands that Snowden turn over all royalties. The fact is the memoir contains no information beyond what is already known. The meritless lawsuit is simply another attempt to harass and intimidate people who are critical of unnecessary mass surveillance. Snowden's book is destined to become a classic, akin to George Orwell's "1984." The difference is that Orwell wrote fiction whereas Snowden describes reality.

Bad Sheriffs a National Phenomenon

Time and again, we hear stories about bad sheriffs – locally, in the state (e.g., Pike County Sheriff Charles Reader), and in the nation. There are countless examples of elected sheriffs who abuse their power, embezzle confiscated property, accept bribes, permit racist behavior and/or police brutality, etc. Why is that? While most sheriffs behave ethically, it is also true that there are few requirements to run for office. Oftentimes, sheriffs are not vetted adequately enough. Most troublesome is the fact that they have almost complete autonomy. There is little or no independent oversight and supervision. There are no term limits. There is no reporting requirement. There is little transparency and no accountability. There are no civilian oversight commissions or civilian complaint review boards. Disciplinary measures are weak. Another factor is that sometimes sheriffs' salaries are based on population. Counties with a small number of residents may pay their sheriffs not enough money, hence they are tempted to steal, lie, and harm others. According to the New York Times, "the problem of sheriffs is particularly acute in the South and Southwest" where the office was

historically used to prop up white supremacy. That legacy is still very much in evidence today (e.g., Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona).

Meaningful criminal-justice reform must include more transparency and accountability of county sheriffs. Local lawmakers should establish democratic oversight structures such as civilian oversight commissions and/or civilian complaint review boards. While the current officeholder in Delaware County is a relatively benign figure, that was not always the case. Counties around the nation should ensure that their sheriffs are good and honest men and women in the future as well, lest they pay the cost for litigation and reputational loss.

Homeland Security Acknowledges Domestic Terrorism

A decade ago, a Homeland Security report on the rising threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism was met with outrage by conservatives and gun-rights groups. As a result, the agency put the issue on the back burner. Now Homeland Security is trying again to address the growing threat of white supremacy and domestic terrorism. Violent extremism, the agency notes, has not only a foreign face but also an American face. Both foreign and domestic radicals pose a threat to the nation. White supremacy, in particular, is "one of the most potent forces driving domestic terrorism" and must be confronted. The new strategy traces white supremacist roots to conspiracy theories about the "ethnic replacement" of whites as the racial majority in American and other Western countries and calls for better data collection, closer collaboration when addressing disinformation, and broader information sharing with local communities and law enforcement that are often underinformed.

"The Problem Is Distribution"

There is plenty of wealth in the world, plenty of food and water, plenty of housing, plenty of knowledge, and plenty of medical know-how. There is plenty of everything, including human resources. How is it then that there is illiteracy, poverty, food insecurity, and disease in many parts of the world? The problem is distribution. Assets are not distributed equally. Some nations have more of this or that than others. Inequalities exist even within the same countries and cities. Some areas have better schools than others, more income than others, cleaner air than others. The problem is distribution.

You don't have to be a socialist to advocate for better and fairer distribution of resources. If you live in a country that produces millions of bananas every growing season, you can sell them to people living in cooler climates. They buy your bananas or cars, and you in turn buy their steel or timber. It's called trade. The market economy is a form of redistribution. The imposition of taxes is another way to ensure a level playing field. Charity and philanthropy is also a benign way of sharing one's treasure.

If the problem is distribution, then redistribution is something that needs to have a much higher priority in national and international conversations. There are ways to redistribute resources fairly and equitably, without resorting to exploitation, expropriation, or confiscation. There are ways to live together in peace and harmony, supported by mutually beneficial agreements involving the economy, technology, medicine, and education. It is the uneven distribution of resources that cause much conflict in the world, so the urgent task is to develop a culture of good will and sharing. Robust diplomacy, not military hardware, is required. Compassion and empathy should be rewarded, not greed and the accumulation of wealth.

"Represent: The Woman's Guide to Running for Office"

"Represent: The Woman's Guide to Running for Office and Changing the World" (Workman Publ. Group 2019, 256 pp., \$19.95) is a new book by actress and activist June Diane Raphael and Kate Black, policy adviser and former vice president at "Emily's List," the largest resource for women. Black recently visited Columbus, her birth city, to promote and discuss the book. "Represent" is a step-by-step guide for women thinking about running for elected office. For them, there are more barriers than for men. The book contains a 21-point checklist that covers topics such as the juggling of responsibilities such as jobs and family life, fundraising, time management, the loss of privacy, and the mental toll. The guide also features female office holders from across the country, incl. some regional and state legislators. – Women make up half the population, yet less than a

quarter of Congress. At the state level, 27% of lawmakers are women. "Represent" is designed to help women overcome the obstacles they face and to correct the historic underrepresentation of women in politics.

The 1816 Battle of Negro Fort

After the 1812 war, runaway slaves took over an abandoned British fortress in Spanish Florida and established a free and independent community outside the jurisdiction of the U.S. Their fortress, overlooking the Apalachicola River, was heavily armed for self-defense and steadily growing, numbering upwards of 1,000. "Negro Fort was the largest and most secure sanctuary for fugitive slaves that has ever existed within current United States boundaries." It was a powerful symbol of black freedom, a source of inspiration, and an open challenge to white supremacy. That alone is an amazing, but rarely heard story.

In 1816, however, led by then major-general and later president Andrew Jackson, U.S. forces waged a brutal war against Fort Negro. The battle began July 15 and ended 12 days later, resulting in the death or capture of nearly every fugitive slave. Although Fort Negro was not located within the territory of the U.S. at that time, American landowners and politicians had created the false narrative that the Negro Fort posed a serious and violent threat to the settlers on the southern border. To justify the illegal invasion of a sovereign territory, Jackson depicted Fort Negro as the base of operations for murderous outlaws who threatened the lives and property of the American people. However, as Dr. Matthew J. Clavin writes in his meticulously researched book, "The Battle for Negro Fort: The Rise and Fall of a Fugitive Slave Community" (New York Univ. Press 2019, 272 pp.), those stories were either greatly exaggerated or downright fabricated. In reality, the fugitives did not seek revenge or the abolition of slavery; they merely wanted to be left alone, pursuing freedom and peace. However, that was not acceptable to the U.S. The institution of slavery was to be preserved by all means, necessitating an undeclared war against fugitive slaves. Andrew Jackson, by the way, was also the man in charge of the forced removal of Native Americans. Supposedly all men are created equal, but Jackson's racist definition of democracy did not include African Americans and American Indians. (Adopted from an article in "Diverse," July 25, 2019.)



Marc Benioff's "Trailblazer"

The founder of Salesforce, a \$130 billion software empire founded in 1999, is Marc Benioff. In a forthcoming book, "Trailblazer" (Currency, 272 pp., \$28, out Oct. 15), he is urging fellow CEOs to help lead a revolution that puts the welfare of people and planet Earth ahead of profits. He wants other CEOs to assist with fighting against economic inequality, climate change, homelessness, gun violence, and anti-LGBT sentiments. Strong values, he says, are the bedrock of any successful company. Sharing the view of the Business Roundtable, he says that "we are at a point where CEOs recognize that they can't just be for their shareholders. They have to be for all their stakeholders."

Some critics have wondered if social activists like Benioff can be trusted. He made \$28.4 million last year, and his fortune is estimated to be \$6 billion. How much do rich people really know about the lives of ordinary people? Still, "Trailblazer" promises to be an inspirational book with broad applications well beyond the realm of economics.

Concerns about "Joker"

There has been a strong backlash against the movie "Joker," out this month on Oct. 4. Family members of mass-shooting victims say the disturbing film, which is rated "R," contains a dangerous and violent message that could potentially motivate tormented individuals with mental-health issues to snap and become mass murderers themselves. Some have called the frightening film,

directed by Todd Philipps, "irresponsible." On the other hand, "Joker" can also be said to present a depiction of America's collective psyche at the moment. The film will be shown in almost every theater around the nation. Movie theaters are reminding ticket buyers that they have policies in place that prohibit real and simulated weapons and face masks. Many also prohibit face paint, incl. AMC and Cinemark in Central Ohio. Expect added security in movie theaters. Warner Bros. has taken the extra step of saying that "Joker" is not an endorsement of violence or meant to glorify the character as a hero.

Ken Burns' "Country Music" Documentary

Over the years, filmmaker Ken Burns has produced excellent documentaries on national parks, the Vietnam War, the Civil War, baseball, and jazz. A 16-hour documentary entitled "Country Music," aired in September by PBS, is his latest production. The series shows the roots of American country music and its development. It also shows how the movement grew from local roots to national fame, helped by radio and television. During the process, the music constantly crossed the racial divide that a segregated nation tried to enforce. Ultimately, Burns says, "country music deals with the most basic, universal human emotions and experiences – love and loss, hardship and dreams, failure and the hope of redemption." Both the film and the accompanying book, written by Dayton Duncan, include never-before seen interviews, photographs, and footage.

Another Horse Dies at California's Santa Anita Track

Since last December, 32 race horses have died at California's Santa Anita track. The 3-year-old colt Emtech broke both front legs in a fall and was euthanized on the track. Necropsies are mandatory for all on-track accidents. The Stronach Group, which owns Santa Anita, has come under sharp criticism from animal-rights groups. Even California Governor Gavin Newsom has made critical comments in the past, saying horse racing is "a sport whose time is up unless they reform." Stronach has instituted new safety measures to protect the thoroughbreds, but the latest fatality is likely to renew doubts about the industry's ability to reform.

Bird Numbers in Decline

A new landmark study published in the journal Science has found that today there are almost 3 billion fewer birds in North America compared to 1970. That's about one-third of all birds in existence. Metrics used include radar data on annual migrations, the Christmas Bird Count, and breeding-bird surveys. The reasons for the catastrophe are all anthropogenic (human-made): deforestation, habitat loss, pesticide use, the massive reduction in insect numbers, and climate change. Other reasons sometimes quoted for bird loss are collisions with buildings with glass facades and glass windows, hunting, and house cats. Even the numbers of common birds are plummeting. For example, Ohio's state bird, the cardinal, has declined by 20 million. – Sadly, the current federal administration is conducting an all-out war against environmental regulations. Federal agencies are busy dismantling the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act. They have no scientific understanding that wildlife needs are also human needs. All creatures need clean air, water, and soil to thrive, incl. the human race.



Lanternflies on the March

Another invasive insect species has arrived in the U.S. and is spreading rapidly. Spotted lanternflies native to Asia have taken over 14 counties in eastern Pennsylvania. They threaten crops including apples, peaches, cherries, grapes, almonds, and hops as well as trees such as oak, walnut, and poplar by eating their sap and excreting honeydew, which coats leaves and blocks photosynthesis. People in Pennsylvania routinely stomp them on sidewalks by the hundreds and thousands. To prevent them from spreading, travelers have been told to check for lanternflies on cars and belongings. Authorities have yet to identify natural predators for the lanternflies other than praying mantises. As of fall 2019, Ohio has not yet had

any confirmed lanternfly sighting, but unfortunately it is just a matter of time before they will arrive in the Buckeye State as well. According to the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri have ideal climactic conditions for them. Anyone who suspects having seen spotted lanternflies in the state should contact the ODA at plantpest@agri.ohio.gov.

WORLD

Who Is the Real Justin Trudeau?

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has a carefully curated image of a young liberal: he is a champion of progressive values, women's rights, indigenous self-determination, immigrants, gun control, and the fight against climate change. However, after the latest scandal in which he is shown wearing blackface and brownface on several occasions well into adulthood some are wondering who the real Trudeau is. It came after he bullied and ousted his justice minister and attorney general, Jody Wilson-Raybould. It came after he said he supports a carbon tax but then spent \$4.5 billion to buy an oil pipeline. And it came after his administration announced it would not pursue electoral reform, despite having made it part of the Liberal Party platform. There is literally a dark side to his character and his policies, both of which come "from a place of privilege" and "a massive blind spot," as he readily admitted. Canada's next national election is at the end of the month (Oct. 21). At this point, it is not clear if he and his party will be reelected or if Andrew Scheer's Conservative Party will win. It does not seem that the latest revelations bothered the white urban majority too much, but even small swings in voting patterns can decide Canadian elections.

Trudeau's main opponent, 40-year-old Andrew Scheer, is a conservative Catholic opposed to abortion, same-sex marriage, and a carbon tax. Many fear he will attempt to make sweeping cuts to social services. In addition, he is currently in a bit of trouble for failing to disclose his dual Canadian-American citizenship. Trudeau and Scheer are currently polling neck-and-neck.

Attack on Saudi Arabia's Oil Infrastructure

Saudi Arabia's sprawling Abqaiq refinery and Khurais oil field, state-owned by Aramco, were hit by 10 drones of unknown origin on Sept. 14. Yemeni Houthis claimed responsibility, but the U.S. alleges the attack did not originate in Yemen. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and President Donald Trump immediately blamed Iran. Although the White House threatened military retaliation, without conclusive evidence, Trump himself toned down the rhetoric within a few days. "That was an attack on Saudi Arabia," he said; "it wasn't an attack on us." Saudi Arabia has so far refrained from naming Iran, which has denied responsibility.

The Abqaiq plant was heavily damaged and suspended production of 5.7 million barrels of oil per day for an unknown period of time. Crude-oil prices soared 14% worldwide, and stock prices fell. Experts predict an increase of gas prices at the pump of 10 to 25 cents per gallon despite Saudi and American reserves. That could depress consumer spending in other areas and lead to a global downturn, perhaps even triggering a recession. It is also noteworthy that the drone attacks were carried with great precision, revealing detailed knowledge of what machinery and tanks to hit for maximum effect. The Saudis appear to have been caught off guard. Not many countries have the technical capability and ruthless determination to carry out such missions. National-security advisers and investors should take note that the drone attack also revealed how fragile and vulnerable the world's oil-and-gas facilities really are. Fossil-fuel assets are prime targets and in danger of being destroyed quickly, easily, and cheaply in a terrorist attack or military campaign. There is no doubt that fossil-fuel investments are increasingly risky business – another reason to diversify the energy portfolio.

The End of the Netanyahu Era?

Neither Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party nor Benny Gantz' Blue-and-White Party received a decisive plurality of votes during the last Israeli election on Sept. 17. However, it appears that Blue-and-White won 33 seats in the 120-seat Knesset compared to 32 seats for Likud. More importantly, both Gantz and Kingmaker Avigdor Liberman have categorically ruled out any coalition with Netanyahu as Prime

Minister. Instead, they are both promoting a broad unity coalition that would govern from the center – perhaps with Likud participation, but definitely not with Netanyahu who has aligned himself with radical right-wing and ultra-Orthodox parties. It is expected that Arab citizens will enjoy greater representation and play a greater role in the next government. And who knows – a coalition without ultra-Orthodox members might even permit the country to finally enact a civil-marriage law, soften the harsh Sabbath restrictions, or make other democratic changes...

Israeli politics are notoriously complicated, and the fallout of the latest election won't be clear until some time from now. However, it appears that the era of Netanyahu is effectively over. He was hoping to be reelected so that he would be protected in his role as prime minister from multiple and serious corruption charges. Now it seems, however, that he will face a court of law and possibly prison. Fighting for his survival, he has canceled a trip to the United Nations. Donald Trump's support for him had not helped; perhaps it even backfired. Even Likud members are saying that their party would have done better with a less controversial and tainted person at the top.

British Court Overrules Boris Johnson

The 11 judges of Britain's Supreme Court have unanimously ruled that Prime Minister Boris Johnson's suspension (prorogation) of Parliament on Sept. 14 to stymie debate on Brexit was unlawful and thus null and void. The landmark decision restores the proper role of Parliament and is a stinging defeat for Johnson. Calls for the resignation of the unelected prime minister were immediate. More than ever, the United Kingdom is in uncharted territory. It is scheduled to leave the European Union on Oct. 31, with or without a deal.

Brexit May Leave UK with Medical Shortages

Although the British government says that it has everything under control, health professionals disagree. More than half of the 12,300 licensed medicines in the U.K. arrive from or via the European Union. In the event of a Brexit without a deal, physicians fully expect delays in shipments and supply shortages and warn that patient safety will be compromised. Doctors predict a spike in illnesses and deaths given that treatments for epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer including leukemia may become unavailable and will have to be rationed. Physicians such as Dr. David Nicholl, who went public with his concerns, say that British politicians are "reckless" because they still refuse to honestly acknowledge the harm caused to patients if the U.K. exits the EU without a divorce deal.

Former Premier Minister Regrets Brexit Vote

Former British Prime Minister David Cameron (2010-16) has published his memoir, "For the Record." In a recent interview he expressed deep regret and sorrow for the 2016 Brexit vote, which catapulted the country into an unending political crisis. The United Kingdom is scheduled to leave the European Union, with or without "a deal," on Oct. 31 of this year. Widespread political and economic chaos is anticipated. Cameron says that "the decisions I took contributed to that failure. I failed." Many people blame him for the referendum and will never forgive him. The memoir, 700 pages in length, includes many additional topics. However, the former prime minister will most likely be remembered for the blunder he made when he called the Brexit referendum. – The case of David Cameron, Theresa May, and now Boris Johnson illustrates that it is always misguided to trust politicians blindly. They are fallible, and their interests are not necessarily aligned with those of their voters and the populace as a whole.

Thomas Cook Travel Company Collapses

One of the world's oldest travel companies, British tour operator Thomas Cook, has collapsed after failing to secure rescue funding amidst mounting debt. Travel bookings for some 600,000 vacationers were canceled as of Sept. 23. Some 150,000 British tourists needed to be flown home in what is said to be the largest British repatriation in peacetime history, costing the government approx. \$125 million. Travelers were protected by a government-run travel insurance program, which makes sure vacationers get home safely. 21,000 employees in 16 countries, incl. 9,000 in the UK, lost

their jobs. Many factors contributed to Thomas Cook's failure, but chief among them is political uncertainty about Britain's departure from the European Union. The travel agency, founded in 1841, will not be the last company to suffer the consequences from "Brexit." Another reason was the fact that Thomas Cook's out-of-touch executives rewarded themselves with high salaries and bonuses at a time when the company's profitability was in sharp decline.

Constitutional Crisis in Peru

The South American country of Peru has plunged into a deep political crisis. Current president Martín Vizcarra dissolved the 130-member Congress and called for new elections on Jan. 26. Congress, in turn, questioned the legality of his move, suspended him and swore in Vice President Mercedes Aráoz as acting head of state. Both now claim to be the country's legitimate ruler. Peru's highest court, the Constitutional Tribunal, will be of no help because it is at the heart of the dispute. Aráoz has said she will take the conflict to the Organization of American States (OAS). – Peru is a country of 32 million people. Its corruption-ridden and dysfunctional political system is fragile. The world has not forgotten Alberto Fujimori's infamous regime that included dismantling the courts, staffing institutions with loyalists, stamping out dissent, and committing human-crime violations.

Spain Removes Franco's Body from State Mausoleum

Spain is the only democracy that has a dictator buried in a state tomb in the Valley of the Fallen where he can be glorified. The country's highest court has now approved the Socialist government's plan to exhume the body of General Francisco Franco (1892-1975) and to relocate it in a less prominent suburban cemetery where his wife is buried. Franco's family fought the measure as did the far-right Vox party. – During Spain's Civil War (1936-39), Franco received significant aid from Fascist Germany (Hitler) and Italy (Mussolini). Hundreds of thousands of soldiers and civilians died during the hostilities. Although Spain remained officially neutral during WW II, Spanish troops helped Germany fight in Russia.

World Unprepared for Pandemics

The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that governments around the globe are ill prepared for pandemics. In megacities and war zones, epidemics can easily spread within a few days and overwhelm the health system. According to some scientists, we are not better prepared than we were for the flu pandemic after WW I that wiped out millions. In an emergency, vaccines are often in short supply and/or cannot reach those who need them most. Researchers are convinced that the next global epidemic will come sooner or later and are calling the report "a wake-up call."

Could the Loch Ness Monster Be a Giant Eel?

DNA scientist Neil Gemmel and his team have taken a new stab to determine what kind of a creature might live in Scotland's Loch Ness. They took a gazillion water samples from various parts of the lake and analyzed the DNA they contained. No evidence was found to support the presence of ancient plesiosaurs, skeletons of which have been excavated in the UK. However, Gemmel says that the water contained "an awful lot of DNA from eels." He does not rule out that "Nessie" might therefore be a giant eel or a family of eels.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Global Climate Strike

Millions of people participated in coordinated worldwide demonstrations ahead of the U.N. climate summit in New York. More than 800 events took place on Sept. 21 in the U.S. alone, incl. one in Columbus, Ohio. Public schools in New York City permitted students to participate in the rallies without retaliation, provided their parents or guardians consented. Unfortunately, many other school districts around the nation do not see fit to excuse their students from demonstrations focused on climate change (or gun control). Conservatives routinely criticize such events as government sponsorship of a particular point of view and worse. Often, they accuse educators of "indoctrination" and "brainwashing." However, in reality it is the young generation that has bravely taken the lead on

climate change, with adults following reluctantly or not at all. Medical professionals around the country have begun to sign virtual "doctor's notes" encouraging teachers and school systems to excuse students on the grounds that climate change is dangerous to their and others' health.

In Ohio, news stations reported 22 climate-strike events. In Columbus, some 500 to 600 young people descended on the Statehouse, demanding Green New Deal legislation and the incorporation of climate science into the academic curriculum. According to the Columbus Dispatch, Democratic candidate for Ohio's 3rd congressional seat, Morgan Harper, was the only politician who gave a speech. She promised to advocate for the Green New Deal and pledged to reject contributions from the fossil-fuel industry. Several other events related to climate change took place throughout the week of the U.N. Climate Summit as well, incl. a town hall-style event in Upper Arlington, a teach-in at Otterbein Univ., and a rally in Delaware on Mon., Sept. 23.



Climate-Change Rally in Delaware

On Sept. 23, some 30-40 people gathered on N. Sandusky St. in front of Delaware's Rutherford B. Hayes Administrative Building for a local climate-change rally. High-school and college students led the event, but members of the Delaware County Democratic Party (e.g., Emma Mirles), Sustainable Delaware Ohio and Citizens' Climate Lobby were also in attendance. No elected public official participated. After speeches, there was a march down Sandusky St. to the Delaware Run and back up to the starting point. Among the inventive placards and chants were slogans such as "Trust the science," "There is no planet B," "No more coal, no more oil, keep your carbon in the soil," and "Climate change is not a lie, do not let our planet die." – The above picture, taken by OWU's Dr. Laurie Anderson, does not depict everyone who was part of the march.

Delaware's Citizens' Climate Lobby

The Delaware chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby will have a special meeting on Tues., Oct. 29 (7 pm), open to all who are interested in hearing about CCL and/or joining the chapter. Elli Sparks, an energetic national CCL leader, will host the meeting at Andrews House, 29 W. Winter St., in Delaware, Ohio.

CCL's new OWU Chapter is focusing on creating awareness and civic engagement among students around climate change. They hope to circulate a student petition asking OWU President Rock Jones to endorse action on climate change and/or carbon pricing.

Among the 190 CCL members from the upper Midwest who attended a regional CCL conference, 34 were Ohioans and 4 from Rep. Troy Balderson's 12th Congressional district. The goal was to grow the number of co-sponsors for House Bill 763, a bill placing a fee on fossil fuels and returning the revenues to American households. The bill currently has 65 co-sponsors.

MAKE AMERICA GRETA AGAIN

Greta Thunberg Addresses Congress & the U.N.

On Sept. 18, Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg addressed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs in Washington, D.C. Rather than giving a long, prepared speech, she only read a brief

statement to which she attached the latest report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). "I want you to listen to the scientists," she said. "I want you to unite behind science. And then I want you to take real action." On Sept. 20, she participated in the Fridays for Future march in New York, New York. And on Sept. 23, she addressed the United Nations. Mincing no words, she said that world leaders have "failed" and "betrayed" her generation by not taking the climate crisis seriously enough. Instead, they keep telling "fairy tales of eternal economic growth." She added that their inaction will never be forgotten and forgiven. – Thunberg has quickly become the face of an international youth-led movement against climate change and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Greta Thunberg Wins Amnesty International Award

Greta Thunberg and her Fridays for Future youth movement won Amnesty International's highest human-rights recognition, the Ambassador of Conscience Award 2019. Kumi Naidoo, AI's Secretary General, bestowed the award at a ceremony at Georgetown Univ. in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 16. Greta Thunberg, 16, said she accepted the recognition on behalf of all the millions of young people around the world who are concerned about the future.



The Global Commission on Adaptation

The Global Commission on Adaptation is a group of 34 "commissioners" from 17 countries. It is led by former U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, World Bank CEO Kristalina Georgieva, and Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates. The group has recently issued a statement that says the world must invest \$1.8 trillion to adapt to climate change consequences, now inevitable. The commission recommends better warning systems for extreme weather and high tides, as well as building new or updated infrastructure that can handle the altered climate of the future and make communities more resilient. To learn more, visit www.gca.org.

Trump Administration Fights Wind Power

The wind-power industry is one of the fastest-growing energy sources in the U.S., but conservatives in Ohio and in the nation are openly hostile toward both land-based and offshore wind-turbine projects. President Trump seems to hate wind turbines, calling them "ugly," "disgusting," and "stupid." He has also said, with no basis in fact, that the noise of turbine blades "causes cancer" – a claim that the American Cancer Society immediately rejected. In Ohio, Republicans have long resisted renewable energies, incl. wind farms. Under Trump, the Interior Dept. has stymied certain offshore wind projects because allegedly "more study" was needed to ensure activities are safe and environmentally responsible. That, of course, is nothing but a ruse. There was zero hesitation to approve offshore oil-and-gas development in coastal areas and Arctic waters. What it comes down to is that the Trump administration is very much beholden to the fossil-fuel industry of the past, incl. coal. It has little or no interest in promoting renewable energies of the future.

William Happer Leaves National Security Council

Dr. William Happer, the climate-change skeptic featured in the last issue of Community Matters, has left the Trump administration. Environmental activists cheered his departure. Happer gained notoriety when he claimed that CO₂ emissions are beneficial and that climate change is not caused by human activity. When he recently attempted to create an advisory panel to question the scientific consensus on climate change, his efforts were quietly blocked by senior administration officials, the military, and the intelligence community. Happer had a friend in John Bolton who supported his positions on climate change, but Bolton was recently ousted from his position as national-security adviser.

Alpine Glaciers Are Disappearing

Switzerland has some 1,500 glaciers, but they are all endangered at this point. They are steadily shrinking and even

disappearing. Hundreds of people participated in a funeral for Pizol glacier in September, which has ceased to exist and will no longer be monitored. A local priest gave a speech to commemorate the retreating ice. (A similar funeral was held in July in Iceland for Okjökull, another glacier lost to climate change.)

At the same time, the Planpincieux glacier, part of the Mont Blanc massif in the Alps, is currently in danger of collapsing. A mountain road was closed, but no residents are considered to be at risk. In 2017, a glacier near the Swiss ski resort of Saas-Fee collapsed. People were evacuated in time, but the ice did not reach any homes and hotels. Over the last 10 years, Switzerland has lost about 15% of its glacier mass. If the trend continues, the country could lose all its glaciers by the year 2100.

100-Foot Rogue Waves Are No Myth

Stories of huge rogue waves were once considered an old sailor's tale. However, there is now plenty of evidence that they are real. In 1995, an oil rig off the coast of Norway was broadsided by an 84-foot wave. And in 2019 when hurricane Dorian was moving up the Northeast coast of the U.S. and Canada, a buoy owned and operated by the Marine Institute of Memorial Univ. of Newfoundland recorded 3 waves that topped 75 feet and 1 mammoth wave that was 100 feet tall. The Institute confirmed that its buoy was calibrated and operated correctly. A number of other stations nearby also reported significant wave heights of 50 feet or more. – Waves of that magnitude rarely hit the coast, but they can damage and even sink ships, oil platforms, and possibly offshore wind turbines.

Will McCallum, "How to Give Up Plastic"

We live in the unholy age of Plasticene. At the current rate, by 2050 there could be more plastic in the oceans than fish, by weight. British Greenpeace activist Will McCallum has written a new book, "How to Give up Plastic: A Guide to Changing the World, One Plastic Bottle at a Time" (Penguin Books 2019, 224 pp., \$15), that was recently discussed at the WOSU radio show, "All Sides with Ann Fisher." His book is a straightforward guide to eliminating disposable plastic items from your life and replacing them with plastic-free, sustainable alternatives. Readers will also learn how to advocate for less plastic to community leaders and businesses.

forecast

the outlook is grim
the planet is at risk

the threat is global
earth is warming

hell and high water
are in the forecast

there may not be
a future for humanity

lawmakers are complicit
in the destruction

the time is now
for a course correction

leading the way
are the children

SPACE

Return to the Moon by 2024?

Early this year, a frustrated White House urged NASA to expedite its plans to land on the moon again by 4 years to 2024. Trump is eager to have another "win." Of course, such administrative fiat is not only completely unrealistic but also dangerous if they end up compromising the safety of astronauts. Ken Bowersox, the new Acting Associate Administrator for the Human Exploration and Operations Mission Directorate and a former space shuttle and space-

station commander, has told a congressional subcommittee that NASA is unlikely to meet the arbitrary deadline. He welcomed an aggressive goal, but also said that many things must come together for 2024 to stand a chance, incl. technological challenges, financial support, and human resources. What Bowersox is indirectly saying is that at the moment chances are not promising.

How Old Is the Universe?

The universe is expanding at an explosive speed. The expansion rate, called the Hubble Constant, is one of the most important numbers in astronomy. It is a tricky task to determine the Hubble Constant, however. Based on a Hubble Constant of 70, the generally accepted age of the universe is 13.7 billion years. Several scientific teams have come up with slower rates of 74, 73.3, and even 67, which would translate into an older age for the universe. On the other hand, a recent Max Planck Institute team led by Inh Jee, came up with the number of 82.4, which would put the age of the universe at around 11.4 billion years. However, Lee had only two gravitational lenses at her disposal, resulting in a significant margin of error. The actual age of the universe remains a mystery, but it is eclipsed by the even broader and unanswerable mystery of the existence of time and space before the birth of the universe.

"Ad Astra"

The new Brad Pitt film, "Ad Astra" ("To the Stars"), is doing well in the movie theaters. Pitt's character, astronomer Roy McBride, goes on a lengthy solo space mission to Neptune in search of his missing father, Clifford (played by Tommy Lee Jones), believed to be dead. Various observers have noted that the movie frequently disregards the laws of physics and depicts things that are technically impossible. When Pitt sneaks onto a rocket as it begins to launch, for example, he would have been killed instantly. The film by James Gray has a lot of good Hollywood stuff as well as some psychological depth, but if you are looking for serious science you will be disappointed.

"Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker"

Details of "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker," set for release Dec. 20, are a closely guarded secret of national importance. Directed by J. J. Abrams, the movie continues the trilogy of films that began in 2015 with Abrams' "Star Wars: The Force Awakens" and Rian Johnson's "The Last Jedi" in 2017. It also ends the 9-film trilogy of trilogies referred to as the "Skywalker Saga." Some information is known, however. Lando Calrissian will return, played by Billy Dee Williams. Although Carrie Fisher died in 2016, unused footage from "The Force Awakens" is used to weave her into the new film. The teaser trailer also includes the distinct cackle of Palpatine, played by actor Ian McDiarmid, so we know that he is returning in some form or another. In fact, the new movie will feature quite a few scenes with all the star heroes in one adventure and in one place together. It will be a treat for "Star War" fans. We sure could use some Jedi values in these dark times.

HAPPY NEWS

Paint Creek Joins Ohio Scenic Rivers System

It is not yet official, and nothing has been publicly announced. However, on Sept. 22 we heard through the grapevine that at the end of this year or the beginning of next year Ohio is getting its 16th "scenic river." Paint Creek in the Chillicothe area (Ross County) is joining the growing family of Ohio's Scenic Rivers, founded in 1968. Designated scenic rivers exhibit exceptional qualities as wild, scenic, and/or recreational. Scenic-river designation does not impact private property rights, but the spirit of the law is to protect high-quality streams so that both present and future generations may experience their natural beauty and ecological value. In Delaware County, the below-dam Olentangy River is an official scenic river.

If interested in the Scenic River program, consider attending the celebration of the 35th anniversary of Darby Creek becoming a National Scenic River on Sun., Oct. 6 (1-5 pm). The celebration will be held at Battelle Darby Creek, Indian Ridge area, 2705 Darby Creek Drive in Galloway.

San Francisco Calls the NRA a Terrorist Organization

San Francisco has recently declared that the National Rifle Association (NRA) is "a domestic terrorist organization." The San Francisco Board of Supervisors passed a nonbinding resolution in early September that also contends that the NRA spreads propaganda that seeks to deceive the public about the dangers of gun violence, a public health crisis. The NRA has since filed a lawsuit based on the principle of free speech. It wants the city's board to rescind or repeal the resolution. – Is the NRA claiming that mass shooters are merely exercising their free-speech right and should therefore not be silenced and punished?

New Mexico May Provide Free Tuition to Residents

Many American families are grappling with the rising cost of tuition, room, and board for their college-age children. As of 2018, 17 states have programs that provide free college to at least some of their students, mostly 20-year institutions. But the free-tuition movement is spreading, and the nation seems to have arrived at an inflection point. Several of the Democratic presidential candidates have promised to make public colleges and universities free if elected.

New Mexico has now gone further than most other states. It has unveiled a plan that would make all of its 29 public colleges and universities free to all "residents," regardless of family income or immigration status. It also includes funds for adults looking to return to school. Some strings are attached, of course. Students must maintain a 2.5 grade-point average (gpa), for instance. Why is New Mexico doing this? The state is trying to strengthen its education system, beginning with early childhood programs, because it knows a state without a robust investment in education has no real future. Economic innovation and prosperity depend on highly trained and/or educated residents. If a state cannot offer what companies look for, they will take their business elsewhere.

The response to naysayers should be as follows. 1. States made high school free at one point because the economy required more than an 8th-grade education. American society and democracy as a whole benefitted from the step. Today, a college degree is the equivalent of what used to be a high-school diploma. Therefore it is time to offer the 2-year and 4-year college experience at no charge. European countries have offered free tuition for decades and often even pay for students' room and board. There was no ill effect. These countries are among the most sophisticated and prosperous on the globe, able to compete around the world. Investment in education today will pay off in the future.



The Tiny-Home Movement

Across the nation, the tiny-home movement is taking off. Not only are "tinies" offered as vacation, resort, park, or Airbnb rentals, they have now become a social movement. Increasingly, they are being looked at as viable options for low-income people, hurricane victims, the formerly incarcerated, the homeless, and other vulnerable people in need. There is no standard for tiny homes, but the Small House Society identifies those under 500 square feet as "tiny." Many in fact have only 200 to 300 square feet. Clusters or colonies of tiny houses have sprung up in many cities all around the U.S. and the world. Sadly, many communities have antiquated zoning laws intended to keep out undesirables. However, it seems infinitely better to house the homeless in such structures than to let them sleep in the streets or under bridges, or in encampments that are eyesores. To circumvent restrictive laws, some owners of tiny houses have mounted them on wheels. Delaware and Central Ohio should also look to pilot a tiny-home community as a possible option for low-cost, affordable housing.

Full Ride for Medical Students

The average medical student graduates with a debt of \$200,000. For that reason, many opt to become specialists rather than practicing family medicine or pediatrics because it pays better. That has led to a doctor shortage in many parts of the country. Cornell University's Weill Cornell Medicine in New York City has now announced a new initiative that addresses the problem. All students who qualify for financial aid will get a full ride that includes tuition, room, and board as well as books and other educational expenses. Other universities too have begun to use major gifts from philanthropic donors to provide financial aid to students so that they don't have to borrow as much.

Tennessee Makes Way for Pollinators

The Tennessee Dept. of Transportation has stopped mowing the grass on the sides of its highways and on the Interstate median. Except for a 16-foot-wide area next to the road, the wildflowers are left alone to bloom and ripen until the first frost. Only then will the area be mowed to keep trees from becoming established too close to the road. The moratorium on mowing some 13,800 miles of rural highways not only saves the state a lot of money, but – more importantly – it protects the state's pollinators such as butterflies, honeybees, native bees, beetles, and other insects from becoming endangered. Habitat destruction and pesticides are among the greatest threats to insect pollinators. Roadside vegetation can form critically important corridors for wildlife, incl. Monarch butterflies during migration.



Pope Unveils Monument for Refugees & Migrants

During the 105th World Day of Migrants and Refugees, Pope Francis unveiled a monument dedicated to displaced refugees and migrants in St. Peter's Square in Rome, Italy. The work by Canadian artist Timothy P. Schmalz, "Angels Unaware," depicts 140 refugees and migrants from various historical periods traveling in a boat. The work includes Mary and Joseph, the parents of Jesus Christ, Jews fleeing Germany, those escaping war-torn countries, and indigenous peoples. The 20-foot sculpture was inspired by a passage in "Letter to the Hebrews" from the New Testament: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it." Schmalz is the same artist who depicted Jesus as a homeless person sleeping on a bench. The social-justice ethos of the Jesuits has long informed Francis' focus on marginalized people, incl. refugees and migrants. The pope has said, for instance, that the lives of the poor and destitute are as "equally sacred" as the lives of the unborn in the womb. This has angered the conservative wing within the Catholic Church where some members and leaders demonize LGBT people, turn their backs on migrants, and ignore the cries of the poor while claiming to defend Christian values.

Mattel Introduces Gender-Neutral Dolls

The toy company Mattel has created a new line of gender-neutral dolls, called "Creatable World." The dolls, which sell for \$29.99 per set, come in a range of skin colors, wardrobes that includes pants and skirts, and 2 sets of wigs. They do not have any features that would identify them as male or female. It is up to the imagination of a child if a doll is a boy, a girl, or neither. Some parents will no doubt be excited about this new option for diversity. Conservatives, on the other, will see it as a further step in the deterioration of "family values." "Creatable World" products will only be available online at first. In the meantime, store clerks will be trained in what pronouns to use when talking about the dolls and how to handle "anxious parents' questions."