

# Community Matters

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

**November 2019**

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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

### **First Friday (11/1)**

First Friday on Nov. 1 (6-9 pm) includes the annual pet walk. For a \$10 registration fee, you will receive a map of pet-friendly locations and a treat for your animal. There is a limit of 150 pets. Registered companion animals will be photographed. In addition, there will be many booths featuring non-profit organizations as well as free & fun activities for the whole family. Delaware County Transit (formerly DATA Bus) will continue to offer a free shuttle service from the Hayes Building at 145 N. Union St. to downtown Delaware.

### **Gallery 22: "Subcutaneum" (11/1 – 12/21)**

"Subcutaneum" is a new art exhibition at Gallery 22 (22 E. Winter St.) by Nick Stull and Liz Morrison. Stull is a '08 graduate of OWU, Morrison a '08 graduate of Oberlin. The couple is married. The show opens Nov. 1 and runs through Sat., Dec. 21. An artist reception takes place Fri., Nov. 1 (6-8:30 pm) in conjunction with First Friday.

### **Retirement Celebration for Jon Powers (11/1)**

A retirement celebration will be held for former OWU Chaplain Jon Powers on Fri., Nov. 1 (3-5 pm) in 301 Merrick Hall. Remarks begin at 4 pm. The building is handicap-accessible and has an elevator. Free & open to the public, but registration is requested through <chaplainpowers.eventbrite.com>. The festivities include some distinguished guests and refreshments.

### **Opera Scenes with Weill & Sondheim (11/1)**

Join OWU's Music Dept. for an evening with excerpts from Kurt Weill's "Street Scene" and Stephen Sondheim's "Sweeney Todd." Weill's jazz-and-blues-influenced masterpiece portrays immigrant life in Manhattan during the 1940s, while those from Sondheim's dark musical make a perfect ending to the Halloween season. The accompanist on the piano is Dr. Youmee Kim. "Street Scenes" will be presented Fri., November 1 (8 pm) in Jemison Auditorium inside Sanborn Hall, 23 Elizabeth St. Free & open to the public.

### **Handmade Craft Bazaar at St. Mary's (11/2)**

The annual Handmade Holiday Craft Bazaar at St. Mary Catholic School (66 E. William St.) will be held Sat., Nov. 2 (9 am – 2 pm). For sale are arts & crafts, jewelry, bath & body products, fashion items, and more.



### **National Bison Day (11/2)**

The first Saturday in November is National Bison Day. The iconic bison is the official national mammal of the U.S. You can observe #NationalBisonDay by reading & learning about buffalos, by visiting a natural history museum, or by driving through a national park. In Central Ohio, you can go to Battelle Darby Creek Metro Park in Galloway where you can see the local herd and experience related activities. The park is open on Sat. from 1 to 4 pm. Admission is free.

### **Ohio Wildlife Center (11/2) – \$**

Help support the Ohio Wildlife Center as it welcomes author James A. Willis for a special presentation on haunted places and weird events in Ohio on Sat., Nov. 2 (4 pm) at 9000 Dublin Rd. in Powell, Ohio. Willis is the author of quite a few popular titles, incl. "The Big Book of Ohio Ghost Stories" (2019). In addition, you will meet "spooky" animal ambassadors of OWC. Tickets are \$5 (free for children 5 & under). No charge if you donate an item from OWC's wish list.

### **"Rock the Symphony": Trivia Extravaganza (11/2)**

The Central Ohio Symphony presents "Rock the Symphony VI: Trivia Extravaganza" on Sat., Nov. 2 (6 pm) at All Occasions Catering in Waldo, Ohio. Please note the new location. Doors open at 5 pm. The event includes trivia host David Hejmanowski, a silent auction, d'oeuvres, adult beverages, and more. Tickets are \$40 or \$300 for a table of 8 and can be bought through Eventbrite.

### **A Cappelloza Concert at OWU (11/2)**

On Sat., Nov. 2 (7 pm), OWU is hosting the 7<sup>th</sup> annual A Cappelloza voices-only concert in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. This year's theme is "Good Vibes." Groups from Otterbein Univ., Ohio Wesleyan Univ., and Wittenberg Univ. will take the stage. In addition, the award-winning 6-member group Ember from Baltimore will perform. (Learn more about them at [www.embervocals.com](http://www.embervocals.com).) Tickets are \$5 via Eventbrite or at the door. They are free for OWU students & staff with valid IDs.

### **Daylight Saving Time Ends (11/3)**

Ohioans will get an extra hour of sleep on Sun., Nov. 3. However, the time change also means that it will get darker an hour earlier. Because of limited visibility, the months of November and December are the deadliest for pedestrians. Drivers need to be extra cautious, and pedestrians and bicyclists should consider wearing reflective clothing and carrying lights.

### **OWU Zoology Lecture (11/4)**

As part of OWU 2019 Sagan National Colloquium, Dr. Meredith Palmer '11 will give a presentation entitled "Taking It to the Field: Zoology in Practice" on Mon., Nov. 4 (7 pm) in Benes A of HWCW Campus Center. Palmer is currently a behavioral ecologist & National Science Foundation postdoctoral scholar at Princeton Univ. She specializes in the study of predators & prey among African & North American land mammals. Free & open to the public.

### **Election Day (11/5)**

Election Day is Tues., Nov. 5. The polls are open from 6:30 am to 7:30 pm. The Delaware County Board of Elections will count provisional ballots on Nov. 25 and certify the count on Nov. 26.

### **Book Signing at Beanbag Books (11/5)**

Come and meet children's book writer and Newbery Honor author Cynthia Lord on Tues., Nov. 5 (5:30-6:30 pm) at Beanbag Books (formerly Fundamentals) at 25 W. Winter St. Lord loves to write about domestic animals. "Borrowing Bunnies" (2019) is her most recent book, but she has written many others. To learn more, visit [www.cynthialord.com](http://www.cynthialord.com).

### **Chamber Music Concert at OWU (11/5)**

Conducted by Dr. Larry Griffin, the Chamber Music Concert will perform on Tues., Nov. 5 (8 pm) in the Jemison Auditorium inside OWU's Sanborn Hall, 23 Elizabeth St. Free & open to the public.

### **Outdoor Sirens Test (11/6)**

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.

### **Presentation on Service Dogs (11/6)**

What are service dogs? What do they do? How do I act around a service dog? Learn about these and other questions from a professional service dog trainer – Rick Wiseman. Explore the laws protecting service dogs & their handlers. Understand the fundamental differences between service dogs and emotional support animals (ESAs). Rick is the founder of Saint Michael K9, a nonprofit & for-profit organization that helps vets and people with PTSD to work together as a team with their dog. The presentation is scheduled for Wed., Nov. 6 (5 pm) in the Benes Rooms of OWU's HWCC Campus Center. Free & open to the public.

### **Asbury Organ Concert (11/7)**

Joan Holder McConnell from Trinity United Church of Christ in Tiffin, Ohio will be soloist in Asbury's First Thursday Noontime Organ Recital Series on Thurs., Nov. 7 (12:15-12:45 pm) at Asbury United Methodist Church, 55 W. Lincoln Ave. The concert series, which runs from October through May, is free & open to the public. Coffee & tea are provided. The full recital program can be found on the church's website.

### **OWU Science Series (11/7)**

OWU's Thursday Science Series is underway. On Thurs., Nov. 7 (4:10-5 pm), OWU's own Zoology professor Eric Gangloff will discuss "Bartleby in the Mountains or What I Learned from Two Years with Obstinate French Lizards." In his talk, Gangloff describes the various experiments he conducted to characterize the physiological, behavioral, reproductive & developmental responses of lizards to reduced oxygen availability at high elevations. The lecture will be held in OWU's Science Center, Rm. 163. Free & open to the public.

### **Human Trafficking Workshop (11/7)**

The Delaware County Against Human Trafficking (DCAHT) Coalition is holding a "Human Trafficking 101 Workshop" on Thurs., Nov. 7 (6-8 pm) at Willis Education Center, 74 W. William St. (2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Rd. 209). The workshop, which is sponsored by the United Way of Delaware County, is free and open to anyone who wants to learn about human trafficking and/or get involved with DCAHT. The coalition combats human trafficking through advocacy, education, prevention, and services. Participants will learn how and where human trafficking takes place, how it affects the victims physically & psychologically, and how to identify & help victims find resources. To register online, go to [www.delawareaht.org](http://www.delawareaht.org).

### **Friends of the DCCL (11/7)**

The Friends of the Delaware County District Library (DCDL) will have their annual meeting on Thurs., Nov. 7 (6 pm) at the Main Library, 84 E. Winter St. Following the meeting & an update from library director George Needham, retired Columbus Dispatch sportswriter Bob Hunter will present and sign his latest book, "Players, Teams, and Stadium Ghosts: Bob Hunter on Sports" (Ohio University

Press 2019, 344 pp., pbk. & hc.). Bean Bag Books (formerly Fundamentals) will be present to sell copies. Free & open to the public.

### **Kiwanis Pancake & Sausage Brunch (11/9) – \$**

The Delaware Evening Kiwanis are presenting their 17<sup>th</sup> Pancake & Sausage Brunch on Sat., Nov. 9 (7 am – noon) at Dempsey Middle School, 599 Pennsylvania Ave. Tickets are \$6, \$4 for elementary-school children, free for veterans and kids under 5. Eggs are \$0.50 each. The fundraiser benefits Kiwanis projects for children, incl. free bike helmets, car seats, school books, and more.

### **Sustainable Delaware Meets (11/9)**

Sustainable Delaware Ohio (SDO) has partnered with the Second Ward Community Initiative (SWCI) at 54 Ross St., off S. Liberty St. and across from Woodward Elementary School. Until further notice, meetings will be held there on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month (9-10:30 am). They are open to the public.

### **Holiday Bazaar at St. Neumann in Sunbury (11/9)**

St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Sunbury (9633 State Rt. 37) will have a Holiday Bazaar on Sat., Nov. 9 (9 am – 2 pm). There will be homemade arts & crafts, a bake sale, food served, and a basket raffle. The fundraiser benefits the woman's club. Visit [www.saintjohnsunbury.org](http://www.saintjohnsunbury.org) for more info.

### **Strand Shows "Sergeant Stubby" (11/9)**

To honor Veterans Day, the Raymond B. Austin American Legion Post 115 (485 Park Ave.) is showing the 2018 movie "Sgt. Stubby: An American Hero" at the Strand Theatre, 28 W. Winter St., on Sat., Nov. 9 (10 am). The animated film is based on a true story during WW I. Stubby, a Boston terrier or bull terrier of uncertain breed, is perhaps the most decorated K-9 war dog in American history. The movie, which has a running time of 84 min., is free. It is appropriate for the entire family.

### **"Daddy-Daughter Date Night" at Del. Grace Church (11/9)**

Delaware Grace Church at 375 Hills-Miller Rd. is hosting a Daddy-Daughter Date Night on Sat., Nov. 9 (5-7:30 pm). The Hawaiian luau (party) includes a BBQ dinner, music, dance, games, crafts & fellowship. Tickets are \$20 per father-daughter pair & \$5 for each additional daughter. Learn more at [www.delawaregrace.org](http://www.delawaregrace.org).

### **Delaware Veterans Parade (11/10)**

All veterans and groups supporting them are invited to join the Delaware Veterans Parade on Sun., Nov. 10. It will step off from the Delaware County Fairgrounds at 3 pm, will then travel south on Sandusky St., and come to a close at Wilmer St. near the OWU campus.

### **Columbus Cello Quartet (11/10)**

UCelli: The Columbus Cello Quartet will perform Sun., Nov. 11 (3 pm) in Jemison Auditorium inside Sanborn Hall, 23 Elizabeth St. The 4 players are: Pei-An Chao, Mary Davis, Cora Kuyvenhoven & Wendy Morton. On the program are two major compositions: David Baker's "Refractions" and Mark Lomax' "Four Women." Both works reflect the African and African-American experience. Free & open to the public. Visit [www.ucelli.org](http://www.ucelli.org) to learn more about UCelli.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Day Breakfast & Celebration (11/11)**

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Veterans Day Breakfast & Celebration will be held Mon., Nov. 11 (9 am) at SourcePoint, 800 Cheshire Rd. The cost is \$5. The breakfast is free for veterans plus one guest. Please RSVP at 740-203-2388.

### **Public Libraries Closed (11/11)**

All branches of the Delaware County District Library (DCDL) are closed Mon., Nov. 11, for staff training. The Bookmobile will not operate either. The digital library, however, remains open 24/7. Normal hours resume Tues., Nov. 12.

### **Olentangy Watershed Alliance Meets (11/12)**

The Olentangy Watershed Alliance (OWA) meets monthly, typically at Delaware's Water Treatment Plant at 225 Cherry St. The

November meeting will be held Tues., Nov. 12 (10 am). On the agenda are past and future events. The meetings are open to the public. OWA is on Facebook and has a new website.

### **Genealogical Society (11/12)**

Do you have a class reunion coming up? Get an early start in planning with the tips & tricks presented by the Delaware County Genealogical Society. Learn how to get lists of classmates and to find missing people. Tips for making contact and how to encourage people to attend a reunion will also be given. Resources available at the Delaware County District Library will be useful in this search, and volunteers will be happy to assist reunion planners. A short business meeting will precede the program on Tues., Nov. 12 (7:30 pm) in the Community Room of the Public Library, 84 E. Winter St.

### **Economic Outlook Conference (11/12)**

OWU's annual Economic Outlook Conference features a panel of experts who discuss their forecasts for the 2020 economy. The event will take place Tues., Nov. 12 (7:30-9:30 pm) in Benes B of OWU's HWCC Campus Center, 40 Rowland Ave. Panelists will be Dr. Bill LaFayette, founder of Regionomics; Dr. Mark Schweitzer, senior vice president of external outreach & regional analytics for the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland; and Dr. Ian Sheldon, Andersons Chair for Agricultural Marketing, Trade & Policy in the Dept. of Agricultural, Environmental & Development Economics at OSU. OWU's Dr. Goran Skosples will serve as moderator. The conference is sponsored by OWU's Dept. of Economics & Business and the Woltemade Center for Economics, Business & Entrepreneurship. Free & open to the public.



### **Chamber Orchestra Concert (11/12)**

OWU's Chamber Orchestra concert, conducted by new faculty member Dr. Antoine T. Clark, will perform "The Lark and the Firebird" on Tues., Nov. 12 (8 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. On the program are Modest Mussorgsky's "Prelude to Khovanshchina" (arr. by Rimsky-Korsakov), Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's "Petite suite de concert", Ralph Vaughn Williams' "The Lark Ascending" with soloist Alicia Hui (violin), and Igor Stravinsky's "The Firebird," which was first performed in 1919. Free & open to the public.

### **One OWU Gathering in Merrick Hall (11/13)**

In response to the discovery of white-supremacist propaganda on the OWU campus, there will be a "One OWU" gathering of unity & support in Merrick Hall (3<sup>rd</sup> floor) on Wed., Nov. 13 (5 pm). Because of an anticipated cold snap, the event was relocated from the labyrinth to 301 Merrick. OWU is committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion and will fight against extremists who threaten the human dignity of individual persons or groups.

### **Historical Society Annual Meeting (11/13)**

The Delaware County Historical Society will have its 2019 Annual Meeting on Wed., Nov. 13 (7 pm) at the Barn at Stratford, 2690 Stratford Rd. The program includes an appearance of astronomer & reenactor Tom Burns as Prof. Hiram Perkins (1833-1924) who built the Perkins Observatory south of town. Free & open to the public, but only current members are eligible to participate in the elections.

### **OWU Science Lecture (11/14)**

"Bending the Rules of Maternal Behavior: Host Defenses against Brood Parasitism" is a lecture that Dr. Mikus Abolins-Abols will present on Thurs., Nov. 14 (4:10-5 pm) in OWU's Science Center, Rm. 163. It is free & open to the public. Brood-parasitic bird species, such as Brown-headed cowbirds, do not build their own nests, but lay and abandon their eggs in other species' host nests. To avoid having to raise an unrelated brood parasitic young, some host species have evolved the ability to reject the parasitic eggs. Abolins-Abols studies

the visual, cognitive & hormonal mechanisms that allow brood parasite hosts to bend their maternal behavior to recognize & reject foreign eggs from their nests.

### **OWU Economics Lecture (11/14)**

Dr. Matt Vollrath, OWU Assistant Prof. of Business Administration, will discuss "Creating a Strong City Brand: A Look at Columbus" on Thurs., Nov. 14 (12-1 pm) in Corns 312, 78 S. Sandusky St. Vollrath worked in marketing & communications before joining OWU in 2017. His presentation represents the university's 2019 Norman Gharrity Lecture. Free & open to the public.

### **Arts Festival Meeting (11/14)**

Anyone interested in helping with the 2020 Arts Festival in downtown Delaware is invited to join the non-profit group on Thurs., Nov. 14 (6:30 pm) at the Andrews House, 39 W. Winter St.

### **One People Meets (11/14)**

One People meets Thurs., Nov. 14 (7 pm) at First Presbyterian Church. Please use the back entry near the corner of W. William and Franklin St. Agenda items include preparations for the next MLK Breakfast and Juneteenth Celebration. – One People is a local organization that works on bridging racial divides in the community.



### **"From OWU to the World" (11/14)**

As part of OWU's Sagan National Colloquium, travel-guide author Cameron Hewitt '98 will discuss his many journeys, incl. his work with travel guru Rick Steves, on Thurs., Nov. 14 (7 pm) in Benes B of HWCC Campus Center. Hewitt studied English, German & Spanish at OWU and has since written multiple travel guides on Central and Eastern Europe. Read about his adventures at <https://blog.ricksteves.com/cameron>. Free & open to the public.

### **Orchesis 19/20 (11/15-16)**

OWU's annual Orchesis Dance will be held in Chappellear Drama Center Fri., Nov. 15 (8 pm) and Sat., Nov. 16 (2 + 8 pm). An informal discussion with the choreographers & light refreshments will follow the performance. Free & open to the public.

### **Turkey Dinner at Rural Chapel UMC (11/17) – \$**

Community members are invited to the 58<sup>th</sup> Annual Turkey Dinner of the Rural Chapel United Methodist Church on Sun., Nov. 17 (12:30-6 pm). Rural Chapel UMC is located at 5860 Cheshire Rd. in Galena, on the east side of Alum Creek Lake. The cost is \$9 for adults and \$7 for seniors. Kids ages 4-11 pay \$6, and kids 3 and under are free. The dinner is a fundraiser; proceeds go to children's programs and the church's scholarship fund.

### **Choral Art Society (11/17)**

Conducted by OWU faculty member Jason Hiester, OWU's Choral Art Society will perform on Sun., Nov. 17 (3:15 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. Free & open to the public.

### **SWCD Hosts Open House (11/19)**

The Delaware Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), located at 557-A Sunbury Rd., is hosting an open house on Tues., Nov. 19 (11 am – 6 pm). The public is invited to learn about SWCD's accomplishments for the year. Enter from Bowtown Rd. Light refreshments will be served. – We would encourage SWCD and other agencies to meet & greet visitors when they show up during open-house events and not ignore them – something that happens far too often. Designated employees should welcome guests and be available for questions & explanations.

### **Park Avenue Jazz Ensemble Concert (11/19)**



OWU's Park Avenue Jazz Ensemble, conducted by faculty member Kevin Turner, will perform Tues., Nov. 19 (8 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. Free & open to the public.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Democratic Debate (11/20)**

The 5<sup>th</sup> Democratic presidential debate will take place Wed., Nov. 20 (9-11 EST) in Atlanta, Georgia. Ten candidates have qualified. MSNBC and The Washington Post are the hosts.

#### **Chamber of Commerce Event at SourcePoint (11/21) – \$**

The Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce (32 S. Sandusky St.) advocates a favorable business climate, serves as a voice for business interests, and is "a champion of prosperity." The public is invited to attend a program with Sheryl Maxfield, Director of the Ohio Dept. of Commerce, on Thurs., Nov. 21 (11:45 am – 1 pm). The cost of \$25 includes a buffet lunch (member pay \$20). Deadline to register is Nov. 11.

#### **Monthly Meeting of Democratic Party (11/21)**

The Central Committee of the Delaware County Democratic Party meets Thurs., Nov. 21 (7:30-9 pm) at Willis Education Center (Rm. 212, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor), 74 W. William St. Free & open to the public.

#### **Dempsey Middle School Presents "Frozen" – \$**

Dempsey Middle School presents the musical "Frozen," based on the Disney film. Performances are Thurs., Nov. 21 (7 pm), Fri., Nov. 22 (7 pm), and Sat., Nov. 23 (2 + 7 pm) in the Hayes High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$12, for students and seniors \$10.

#### **Symphonic Wind Ensemble (11/21)**

Conducted by OWU faculty member Dr. Richard Edwards, the Symphonic Wind Ensemble will perform a 2<sup>nd</sup> fall concert on Thurs., Nov. 21 (8 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. The concert is free & open to the public. The theme of the concert is "Fire & Ice." The following works are on the (tentative) program: Chasing Sunlight (Nishimura), Vesuvius (Ticheli), Russian Christmas Music (Reed), In the Bleak Midwinter (Holst), and Sleep (Whitacre), with a guest performance by the OWU Choral Arts Society.

#### **24<sup>th</sup> Annual Delaware Area Handbell Festival (11/24)**

The 24<sup>th</sup> annual Delaware Area Handbell Festival will take place Sun., Nov. 24 (7 pm) in Gray Chapel inside OWU's University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. A dozen area churches participated in 2018. Free & open to the public, but donations are accepted. Organizer Ruth Rabby informs us that the concert is always on Sunday before Thanksgiving. (Please note that the date printed in the last program for the Central Ohio Symphony contained an error.)

#### **Thanksgiving (11/28)**

Thanksgiving is celebrated on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday in November. This year, it is as late as it can possibly be – Nov. 28. Thanksgiving started out as a holiday during which people thanked God for a plentiful harvest. Today, it is largely a secular family event.

#### **Christmas Market at Boardman Arts Park (11/29 – 12/1)**

Christmas Market at the Boardman Arts Park (154 W. William St.) will be Fri., Nov. 29 (1-8 pm), Sat., Nov. 30 (11 am – 8 pm), and Sun., Dec. 1 (11 am – 4 pm). Come out for ice skating, curling, entertainment, food, shopping, and other family fun.

#### **Holiday Open House at the Nash House (11/30-31)**

The Nash House at 157 E. William St. is a beautiful 1878 Victorian family house that will be festively decorated for the holidays. Members of the Historical Society will be at hand to answer questions. Refreshments will be served. The times are Sat., 2-5 pm, and Sun., 3:30-5:30 pm. Free & open to the public.

#### **Sakata Exhibition Opens at Arts Castle (12/1)**

A student art exchange is currently in process between Delaware and its sister city in Japan, Sakata. The Arts Castle will be hosting more than 40 pictures from Sakata students. A reception is

planned for Sun., Dec. 1 (3-5 pm). A short presentation will be held at 3:30 pm.

#### **Lessons & Carols Concert (12/2)**

The annual "Lessons and Carols Concert," conducted by OWU faculty member Jason Hiester, will perform Mon., Dec. 2 (7 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall, 61 S. Sandusky St. Free & open to the public.

## **THE CITY OF DELAWARE**

#### **The City of Delaware in November**

City Council meets Mon., Nov. 11 and 25 (7 pm). Additional meetings of boards, committees, and commissions includes Civil Service Commission (Wed., Nov. 6, 3 pm), Planning Commission (Wed., Nov. 6, 6:30 pm), Board of Zoning Appeals (Wed., Nov. 13, 6:30 pm), Parks & Rec Advisory Board (Tues., Nov. 19, 6:30 pm), and Historic Preservation Commission (Wed., Nov. 20, 6:30 pm). The Public Works / Utilities meeting on Nov. 5 has been cancelled. It is possible for other meetings to be cancelled due to a lack of agenda items or quorum. Always check the city's website ([www.delawareohio.net](http://www.delawareohio.net)). – The city's offices are closed on 11/28 and 11/29 due to Thanksgiving. The pace will pick again in December when City Council meets on Dec. 9 and 19 (7 pm). Budget sessions are planned for Dec. 2 and 5 (6:30 pm) as well as Dec. 12 (if needed).



#### **City Council Discusses "Dirty Politics"**

The Building Industry Association (BIA) of Central Ohio has a political action committee (PAC) that proudly declares on its website: "In recent elections, we have successfully supported winning candidates for county commissioner, township trustees, and city councils." The BIA was attempting to interfere in the Nov. 5 elections for Delaware City Council as well. Feathers and fur were flying at the last meeting of City Council before the Nov. 5 elections. On Oct. 28, Councilwoman Lisa Keller was once again taking developers to task for exerting unwarranted pressure on members of City Council. She called this "a disturbing trend." Keller also mentioned robocalls to voters in her ward on behalf of the "Delaware Business PAC" (2541 Bay Harbor Dr., Galena, OH 43021) that accused her of wanting to raise taxes, tax levies, and her own salary. Running against her was Mike Rush, a close friend of the Building Industry Association (BIA). He had originally pledged to run a positive campaign, but he did distance himself from the negative ads.

Councilman Kent Shafer, who is not up for reelection this year, stated that he is indeed a proponent of development and more residential housing in Delaware because "it is good for the city." He has accepted significant campaign contributions from the BIA in the past, according to information from the Delaware County Board of Elections. However, he vigorously defended his reputation as a former law-enforcement commander and said that his integrity is being attacked unfairly.

Councilmember George Hellinger did not address the issue directly. However, he bemoaned that certain people had "hidden agendas" that are not necessarily in the best interest of the city. For that reason, he wants to see more turnover on city boards and commissions. He did not use the word, but in effect he advocated for term limits to get rid of entrenched interests and allow for the influx of fresh blood. He casually mentioned that for that reason he will "not run again" when his term is up in 2021.

Mayor Carolyn Riggle, who is not a flaming liberal, expressed her dismay that the Delaware County Republican Party is sticking its nose into the race for City Council. Council and Council elections are supposed to be civil and nonpartisan, but apparently the Delaware GOP has not gotten the message. Riggle has since written a strong public letter of support for Councilwoman Lisa Keller.

## **Delaware City Council Elections**

Elections were held on Nov. 5. Below are the preliminary results from the Delaware County Board of Elections:

### Ward 1

Chris Jones – 842 votes / 100%

### Ward 2

Lisa Keller – 916 / 68.36%

Mike Rush – 266 / 19.85%

Stephen Tackett – 158 / 11.79%

### Ward 3

Cory Hoffman – 452 / 51.89%

George McNab – 419 / 48.11%

### Ward 4

Drew Farrell – 756 / 57.40%

Sarah JanTausch – 561 / 42.60%

The 3 councilmembers at large (Hellinger, Riggle, and Shafer) were not up for reelection. Their term expires in 2021.

## **City Council Has Reorganizational Meeting**

City Council will hold a Reorganizational Meeting on Mon., Nov. 18 (7 pm) at City Hall, 1 S. Sandusky St. The oath of office will be administered to all 4 winners of the Nov. 5 elections. In addition, City Council will elect or reelected the mayor and vice mayor.

## **Unity Park**

Second Ward Councilwoman Lisa Keller and Parks & Natural Resources Director Ted Miller invited residents to take part in a public meeting to review concept plans and amenities for the expanded Unity Park, currently called Ross Park, on Oct. 29. Other city officials were also present. Two concepts were presented, one with a splash pad and another way with an adventure playground. The community garden at S. Liberty St. may be moved to the back. Existing structures along the multipurpose trail will be razed and the park extended to Noble Street, but the buildings along Ross St. will be preserved and repurposed. Also solicited was feedback on possible amenities in the future park, incl. lighting, a shelter house, benches, cameras, a bike rack, a hydration station, and the like. It was good to see many residents from the Second Ward and from the broader city actively participate in the process and to develop a sense of ownership.

## **Cobblestone Drive Extension**

At City Council on Oct. 14, officials confirmed earlier discussions about a new connector between Penick Ave. and Cobblestone Dr. on the city's west side, just south of Schultz Elementary School. The decision is "settled," according to City Engineer / Director of Public Works Bill Ferrigno. However, details still need to be worked out. The land is owned by Delaware City Schools, and the school system would use the new connector as the primary access road for its busses to drop students off and pick them up. That should help with the traffic congestion on Applegate Ln. Of course, it means more traffic on Penick and Cobblestone and possibly Rockcreek Dr. The project is not programmed into the city's budget for 2020, but could be added at a later point as an amendment. It is unlikely that the completion date would be before 2021 or even 2022.

## **Cemetery Master Plan**

With 80 acres, Oak Grove at 334 S. Sandusky St. is Delaware County's largest cemetery. Established in 1851, it also serves as a de facto park and arboretum for many residents. It is also prime wildlife habitat. A new master plan for Oak Grove envisions several new sections: a gateway garden near the Sandusky St. entrance, a meandering creek-walk & nature-walk garden, a memorial garden with a small pond near Liberty Rd., and a cremation garden with columbarium spaces for cremated remains. The existing house would be demolished to gain more space. The plan emphasizes that the national cremation rate, currently at about 50%, is projected to increase by about 2% each year to reach 70% in 10 years and 90% in 20 years from now. There will be fewer and fewer ground burials in the foreseeable future. The price tag for all suggested projects, to be done in 4 phases, would be close to \$3.46 million.

## **No Green Burials at Oak Grove Cemetery**

In green burials, deceased bodies are not embalmed (or embalmed with eco-friendly fluids) and dressed in organic garments; coffins are made from recycled and/or biodegradable materials and laid in soil instead of a concrete vault; and a tree or an engraved rock replaces cut-and-polished stone monuments. Buried bodies decompose naturally and quickly, with a minimal impact on the environment. Although the idea has much merit and is gaining in popularity, few cemeteries in Ohio currently offer the option.

Delaware's Cemetery Master Plan for Oak Grove (Appendix #4) describes the burial techniques well, perhaps even favorably, but then inexplicably states that "the option is not recommended." The rationale provided merely says, "a Green Burial Section requires considerably more attention than standard burial options." No real reason is provided for this definitive, but unsubstantiated pronouncement. It would seem that a green burial section would require the same attention, or perhaps even less, when being constructed and maintained. There is no reason why Oak Grove Cemetery could not add a green-burial section when it is being expanded. In fact, adding the option to the portfolio might help with the bottom line.

## **Finance Director Dean Stelzer Retires**

The City of Delaware's Finance Director, Dean Stelzer, has announced his retirement effective Jan. 21, 2020. He started in 1990 and will have served close to 30 years as director. A search for his replacement is already underway. The application deadline is Nov. 24. – Delaware is a city of more than 42,000, with a total budget of \$119.6 million. The annual operating budget is approximately \$71.6 million. The city has a AA2 bond rating, in part thanks to Stelzer's prudent fiscal management.

## **2 Electronic Recycling Drop-Off Events**

In partnership with the Delaware Knox Marion Morrow (DKMM) Solid Waste District, the City of Delaware will offer two electronic recycling drop-off events. The 1<sup>st</sup> will be a string / holiday light collection that runs from Nov. 29 through Jan. 2. Indoor drop-off boxes will be available at various locations around the city, incl. all locations of the Public Library. The 2<sup>nd</sup> event will be a single-day drop-off for electronics on Sat., Jan. 4 (8 am – 12 pm) at 241 Cherry St. Computers, cables, batteries, etc., will be accepted. Some fees may apply for certain electronics such as televisions. For more info, contact Jenifer Way-Young at [jway-young@delawarehealth.org](mailto:jway-young@delawarehealth.org).

## **High-Hazard Dam at Greenwood Lake**

Insiders know that the dam at Greenwood Lake is one of Ohio's more than 100 high-hazard dams in poor and unsatisfactory condition. If it fails and inundates the area, it could endanger lives and property downstream. The private property off Lake St. is owned by the Salvation Army, which has been trying to sell it. The existence of the dam, however, has been an insurmountable obstacle so far. The other high-hazard dam in poor and unsatisfactory condition in Delaware County is Timber Lake Liberty Dam south of town. – One way to bring owners who cannot afford costly repairs in compliance with the law is to lower the water level behind the dam or to remove the dam entirely.

## **Castle Arts Affair**

Castle Arts Affair is an annual event at Delaware's Arts Castle, 190 W. Winter St. The pre-holiday arts sale showcases original, affordable, high-quality arts & crafts created by some 90 artists. The parlor, several studios, and parts of the 7,000-square-foot "Castle" will be transformed into a bazaar that attracts hundreds of buyers every year. The 2019 dates are Nov. 7-10 and Nov. 14-17. For details, visit [www.artscastle.org](http://www.artscastle.org).

## **Zion AME Has New Pastor**

Rev. Dr. Ruth McCants Locke has been appointed as the new pastor of Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church at 140 S. Washington St. She has a masters from Payne Theological Seminary and a doctorate from United Theological Seminary, both in Ohio. She is married to Jim Locke III, and the couple has one son.

## **Arena Fair Theatre**

Arena Fair Theatre, now in its 10<sup>th</sup> season, will perform "A Bing Crosby Christmas" on Sat., Dec. 7 (2 + 7 pm) in the Auditorium of the Willis Education Center, 74 W. William St. Tickets are \$15 per person. ("A Christmas Story" was cancelled due to issues with venue space.) To learn more and to order tickets, visit [www.arenafair.com](http://www.arenafair.com). Arena Fair Theatre is also on Facebook.

### **Sustainable Delaware Ohio**

The 10-member board of Sustainable Delaware Ohio (SDO) held a retreat on Oct. 12. The purpose was to revisit SDO's vision and mission and to develop strategies and priorities for the future. The current mission statement reads, "Sustainable Delaware is a group of residents focused on promoting environmental, social, and economic sustainability for the Delaware community through awareness, advocacy, and action." Most board members continue to feel comfortable with the statement and believe that sustainability is indeed "key to the future." There was also consensus that climate action should be the "central" focus of SDO. However, it seems little time was spent on defining what "sustainability" is and means, and so there was some flailing as far as the philosophy of sustainability is concerned. For some, it means zero waste, plastic reduction, less consumerism, walkability & bikeability, gardening & composting, recycling & upcycling, health & wellness. These are all excellent and achievable objectives. For others, however, sustainability means even more – deep ecology, a revolutionary paradigm shift, the end of fossil fuel, climate action, empowering people, social justice, redistribution of income and means of production, and so on. SDO was intended to be a big tent when it was founded 10 years ago, but tensions between those who favor sustainability light and those who advocate more radical change have divided the organization since its beginning. SDO's next strategic plan will not make these differences go away. In addition, organizations that spend an exorbitant amount of time on structure, bylaws, strategic plans, etc., often run the risk of being disconnected from the here and now. They end up missing in action when important consultations happen and decisions are due. An exclusive focus on structure can be a distraction to an organization, rather than an enhancement, and can lead to a lack in community engagement.

### **Spiritual Horizons**

A new spiritual center opened in Delaware last summer. It is located at 230 N. Sandusky St. and led by Rev. Lucy Frances. The center's mission is to be an open, sacred place where people can explore their spirituality without fear of judgment and rejection. Affiliated teachers teach a wide variety of Asian and New Age practices, with particular attention to Reiki. An upcoming workshop with Heidi Howes focuses on shamanism. To learn more, visit <https://yourspiritualhorizons.com>. Spiritual Horizons is also on Facebook.



### **Update on Breakaway Cycling**

After 25 years in downtown Delaware, Breakaway Cycling has moved from 17 W. William St. to 220 E. William St. It is now located in the building of the former Delaware County Community Market, near the corner of E. William St. and Lake St. The store reopens Mon., Nov. 4. The new location offers plenty of parking, is close to the head of a bike trail, and will have a mountain bike test track behind the store. To learn more, visit [www.breakawaycycling.com](http://www.breakawaycycling.com).

### **Del-Mor Dwellings at 250 Curtis Street**

Ground has been broken and dirt moved at 250 Curtis St., the future Del-Mor Dwellings at the corner of Curtis and Firestone. The existing home has been demolished to make room for new buildings. It's been almost two years since the Planning Commission and City Council approved the plan, but it seems the project is now well underway. Del-Mor Dwellings Corp. is building up to 48 one-bedroom rentals for vulnerable people with physical and intellectual disabilities on 3.6 acres on the site, just south of the Hidden Ridge Apartments complex. During the debates in 2017/18 it was pointed out that

Delaware has a tremendous unmet need for affordable rentals for people with disabilities. – Within a year or two, the City of Delaware will also start to tackle and improve the existing intersection at Curtis and Firestone.

### **Democratic Party Looking for New Headquarters**

Since 2006, the Delaware County Democratic Party has had its headquarters on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of 12½ N. Sandusky St. Lack of handicap-accessibility has been a problem from the start. The current 3-year lease will expire at the end of the calendar year and the rent will go up from \$825 per month to \$975 per month, a 15% increase. It will continue to go up an additional \$100 annually for years to come. That prompted the organization to create a committee that searched for other locations, both within the City of Delaware and in the county. At the Oct. 17 meeting of the DCDP's Central Committee, two options were presented: the current facility and a new headquarters on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor at 92 N. Sandusky St., which would be handicap-accessible. ADA compliance is highly desirable for a party that wants to be inclusive, as many people emphasized at the meeting. However, it was also pointed out that most public DCDP meetings and events are held at other locations, incl. the Willis Education Center, which are handicap-accessible. A spirited debate ensued about the pros and cons of the two proposed solutions. In addition, a number of people expressed their view that there is no need to rush the decision since the current lease can be renewed on a month-by-month basis. Prior to the discussion, Chair Peg Watkins had announced that she would be the one making the final decision by executive fiat after soliciting input from everyone. – **Update:** The pros and cons of the possible relocation will be discussed some more at a special meeting on Thurs., Nov. 14 (7:30 pm) at the Willis Building.

### **Update on the Wesleyan Inn**

There have been rumors that Jim Manos is no longer the owner of the Perkins House at 235 W. William St. or the land it is sitting on. Candidate for City Council Mike Rush was one of the people who made a statement to this effect on his Facebook page. According to spokespeople from the City of Delaware, however, the rumors are unfounded. Jim Manos has not (yet) sold the property, although he reportedly attempted to do so. The City expects him to return to the Planning Commission and to City Council soon with a scaled-back version of his boutique hotel, the Wesleyan Inn. The original plan was supposed to have 40+ rooms. The new plan, which has yet to be submitted, seems to envision not more than 20+ rooms. Manos' concept was controversial in 2018. A smaller footprint would be better aligned with the residential character of the neighborhood and would surely be welcomed by nearby residents. However, does a smaller version still make economic sense for Manos? – In the meantime the vacant building continues to deteriorate, and the memory of all the beautiful trees that were prematurely and needlessly removed, chopped up, and burned on site is painful.

### **Habitat for Humanity ReStore at New Location**

Habitat for Humanity's ReStore is now located at 1161 Columbus Pike (US 23 S), in the Delaware Square near Goodwill. It is open M-F 10 am – 8 pm and Sat. 10 am – 6 pm (closed Sundays). Special discounts apply for veterans on Wednesdays and seniors on Thursdays. The store happily accepts donations such as major appliances, kitchen cabinets & fixtures, door & windows, lumber, tools, lighting fixtures, housewares & furniture, and electronics.

### **Skipping Probate Presentations**

When someone passes away "intestate" (without a valid will), the case goes to Probate Court. This can be expensive and tie up properties and vehicles for months. The Delaware County Recorder's Office is offering two presentations on how to avoid the Probate Court process. The 1<sup>st</sup> one is on Mon., Nov. 4 (5:30 + 7:30 pm) at Olentangy High School at 675 Lewis Center Rd. in Lewis Center, the 2<sup>nd</sup> one on Mon., Nov. 25 (5:30 + 7:30 pm) at Big Walnut High School at 555 S. Old 3C Rd. in Sunbury. The events are sponsored by Judge David A. Hejmanowski, Del. Co. Recorder Melissa Jordan, and Del. Co. Clerk of Courts Natalie Fravel. Please RSVP to [mjordan@co.delaware.oh.us](mailto:mjordan@co.delaware.oh.us) if interested in attending one of the sessions.

### **Home Energy Assistance Program Starts Nov. 1**



The Home Energy Assistance Winter Crisis Program runs from Nov. 1 until March 31. It helps income-eligible Ohioans pay heating bills and can assist with furnace repairs, fuel-tank testing, and fuel-tank replacement. 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](http://www.energyhelp.ohio.gov). A face-to-face meeting with Bridges Community Action in Delaware (555 Sunbury Rd.) is required. To schedule an appointment call 740-369-3184.

#### **Delaware County Transit Takes You to OSU Football Games**

Delaware County Transit takes OSU football fans to the games and back, thus avoiding traffic and parking hassles. The Delaware pick-up point is Meijer's at 1380 Sunbury Rd. (Rt. 36/37 E.). Passengers transfer to COTA busses at Crossroads in the Polaris area. Roundtrip tickets are \$5 per adult and \$2 for children 12 and under. Visa or Mastercard payment is due at the time of reservation. Visit [www.delcotransit.com](http://www.delcotransit.com) or call 740-363-3355 (9 am – 4 pm) for details.

#### **Foundation Laid for New Beginnings UMC**

The foundation has been laid for a new 6,000-square-foot church for New Beginnings United Methodist Church at 2163 State Rd. 36/37 E., not far from the Kroger Distribution Center. Services are currently held at an existing pavilion on the site, but more space was needed. The new church will have a sanctuary, a gathering area for events and activities, and several classrooms. If all goes according to plan, the construction project will be completed in early 2020.



#### **Jon Peterson Passes Away at Age 65**

Delaware County Treasurer Jon Peterson (1953-2019) has died at age 65, following a heart procedure at Vanderbilt Univ. in Tennessee. Peterson was a 1976 graduate of OWU and earned an M.A. in public administration from Florida Atlantic Univ. and a law degree from Capital Univ. in Columbus, Ohio. He also had a degree from MTSO and was an ordained minister with the United Church of Christ in Delaware. Peterson had a long and distinguished career in Franklin County, Delaware County, and the State of Ohio. From 1998 to 2008, he served as an elected state representative for Delaware County. Due to term limits, he returned to Delaware County and was elected County Treasurer in 2008, a post he held until his death.

Most importantly, Peterson was a gentle soul and a man with a big heart endowed with much compassion. As state representative, he frequently advocated for Ohio's most vulnerable population groups – people afflicted with physical and intellectual disabilities, children suffering from food insecurity, the homeless, and others overlooked by society. As pastor of Zion United Church of Christ at 51 W. Central Ave., he was instrumental in creating a shelter for homeless men during cold winter months – a legacy that continues through today. Lastly, Peterson also had artistic talent. He played the guitar in various rock bands and performed leading roles in several local theatrical productions. His was a life well lived.

#### **Delaware County Commissioners Appoint Acting Treasurer**

The 3 Delaware County Commissioners unanimously appointed Deputy Treasurer G. Douglas Crew, a 10-year employee, as interim treasurer. The Delaware County Republican Party (Central Committee) will soon appoint a successor to Jon Peterson who will complete the remainder of the term, which expires Sept. 5, 2021. Applications are already being accepted and screened. A vote has tentatively been scheduled for Nov. 21.



#### **Ohio Heartland Chorus Is Looking for Singers**

The all-female Ohio Heartland Chorus invites you to its weekly Monday rehearsals (7-8:30 pm) at First Presbyterian Church (upstairs Choir Room). The choir is currently looking for bass, lead, tenor, and baritone female voices. Professional training and the ability to read music are not required. First Presbyterian Church is located at 73 W. Winter St.; please use the back entrance. Check out the choir at [www.ohioheartlandsings.org](http://www.ohioheartlandsings.org). The Ohio Heartland Chorus is affiliated with Sweet Adelines International.

#### **People in Need**

People in Need (PIN) of Delaware County is welcoming Martin Terry as the successor of Randy Bournique on Nov. 4. He has an extensive and proven record as a leader in the area of social services for low-and-moderate-income (LMI) families. A native of Chillicothe, he holds a B.A. degree from OSU and is a resident of Delaware. – PIN's largest annual event, the Holiday Clearinghouse, is coming up Sun., Dec. 8. Nearly 500 families and 250 older adults will receive food for the holidays, winter coats, and new toys.



#### **No-Shave November**

You may soon see more fuzzy faces than usual. No-Shave November officially started 10 years ago in Chicago. Participants forgo shaving & grooming their beards and donate the money they would have spent on shaving for cancer research, prevention & education. Local officials such as the police chief regularly participate in the initiative. Learn more at [www.noshave.org](http://www.noshave.org).

#### **Reclaimology Opens on E. Winter St.**

Reclaimology has moved from Sunbury to Delaware and just opened, or is about to open, a larger space at 332 E. Winter St., close to the Dairy Depot. We have yet to visit the store, but our understanding is that it offers a wide range of vintage furniture, arts & crafts, home décor, ornaments, gifts, and the like. Most items are hand-made and/or repurposed and upcycled. Reclaimology is on Facebook where you can find images of the store.

#### **RNR Tire Express at 150 S. Sandusky St.**

At last check, it looks like RNR Tire Express at 150 S. Sandusky St. (the former Goodyear location) is on the verge of opening any day now. Workers are putting on the finishing touches. The website has been up and running for a while. Business hours will be Mon. through Fri., 9 am – 7 pm, and Sat., 9 am – 5 pm.

## **OHIO WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY**

Like many other colleges and universities, OWU stands at the beginning of another major realignment or restructuring phase. At the last meeting of OWU's faculty on 10/21, both President Rock Jones and Provost Chuck Stinemetz acknowledged the presence of a certain anxiety among faculty members and stated that they very much would like to see a retrenchment model implemented that is based on voluntary attrition rather than forced layoffs of untenured young faculty members. OWU has the option of offering buyouts and early retirement packages. It would save the university money in the long run because the compensation for assistant professors is lower than that for full professors. However, this would require the approval of additional funds from the Board of Trustees. This approach would also have the added advantage of assuring junior faculty members that they continue to be needed, valued, and welcome at OWU and therefore have little reason to look for new positions elsewhere. Provost Stinemetz urged untenured faculty members to believe in a future at OWU.

Jones' and Stinemetz' preference for the voluntary model is reassuring in some ways. However, junior faculty members are not exactly off the hook. It is still possible for entire departments and

programs to be merged, reduced, or discontinued altogether based on cost-benefit analyses or their perceived value to OWU's liberal-arts mission. It is, after all, the Board of Trustees that retains the ultimate authority for approving proposals as to program and position reductions and terminations. Old-timers remember when the school's entire Nursing Program was shut down. Although at this point no decision has been made, there are already plenty of unfounded speculations and rumors percolating through campus that are the cause of much uncertainty and concern.

### **In Praise of Student-Musicians**

The phrase "student-athlete" is often batted around to describe students who are scholars and NCAA athletes at the same time. It is peculiar, however, that the phrase "student-musician" is rarely heard although the same principle should apply to students who perform on a high level of musicianship while pursuing majors in other programs. There are numerous student-musicians at Ohio Wesleyan, but they do not nearly receive the recognition they so richly deserve. For example, there are no fancy banquets and award ceremonies for them. And the media hardly ever covers musical events with the same interest and scrutiny as they cover football, soccer, or baseball. And while scouts and recruiters observe sports events at high schools in search of talent, no such effort exists in the realm of music. OWU's current Strategic Plan says, "Continue and enrich the strong tradition of intercollegiate athletics at OWU," but there is not a single word about music and the arts.

That is unfortunate. Just like athletics, music is an integral part of the student experience at OWU. The Music Department brings hundreds of prospective students to campus every year. These lines were written shortly after the last Choral Festival Concert (10/27) in which 4 surrounding high schools participated. But there is also the annual High School Band Festival in January, the new OWU Summer Music Camp, and similar initiatives. Student enrolled at OWU participate in a cappella groups, the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, the Park Avenue Jazz Ensemble, the Choral Art Society, the Chamber Orchestra, in special and holiday events, and so on. They also give individual recitals in voice performance, instrumental performance, and composition.

No one in their right mind would dare to touch the athletic program – it helps recruit and retain students. The same is true, or should be true, for the music program. Music and the arts in general are no less important for the development of well-rounded persons as is sports – perhaps even more so because, quite frankly, athletics cannot sustain you for the rest of your life in the same abiding way music and the arts can. In addition, we have never heard of musicians being injured during rehearsals and performances whereas concussions and broken bones are common among athletes.

### **2020 OWU Summer Music Camp**

The 2019 OWU Summer Music Camp, directed by Dr. Richard Edwards, was so successful that it is being repeated. The 2020 camp is scheduled for the week of July 5-10. Middle and high school students (grades 6-12) have many options: orchestra, concert band, jazz band, rock band, musical theater, film music, composition, and private lessons. Both the overnight-camp and day-camp option are available. The summer camp concludes with two public concerts, one for middle-school, the other one for high-school campers. Registration opens Feb. 3, 2020. Visit [www.owu.edu/summermusiccamp](http://www.owu.edu/summermusiccamp) to learn more.

### **OWU Hires New Director of Public Safety**

Ohio Wesleyan's Public Safety Director Bob Wood has retired after 13 years of service, and OWU has hired a new individual, Sean Bolender, who will start Dec. 1. The campus community is invited to meet and greet him on Tues., Dec. 3 (4-5 pm), in OWU's HWCC Campus Center, Crider Lounge (2<sup>nd</sup> floor). – Bolender has a B.S. and an M.B.A. degree from OSU. He worked as program coordinator in OSU's Dept. of Public Safety for 12 years and also has experience as an EMS technician. He is currently serving with the U.S. Dept. of Justice.

### **Students of Color Leadership Conference at OWU**

The 2019 SOCLC Conference is taking place at Ohio Wesleyan this year. The two keynote speakers are Cathleen

Richardson who will speak on educational technology on Fri., Nov. 1 (7 pm) in Gray Chapel inside University Hall. ABC anchor John Quiñones will speak on Sat., Nov. 2 (6 pm) in the Benes Rooms of OWU's HWCC Campus Center. Unfortunately, both presentations were poorly advertised on campus and in the wider community. Both lectures are free & open to the public.

### **White Supremacist Propaganda Found on OWU Campus**

On Nov. 1, a number of posters, flyers, and stickers were found on the OWU campus representing a group associated with white supremacy. It is believed that they were the work of outsiders, not members of the OWU community. The FBI is investigating the incident, along with similar recent incidents at multiple Ohio college campuses. The group suspected of being involved is the Patriot Front. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) describe the organization as a white supremacist, fascist group and by the FBI as having ties to a neo-Nazi rally motivated by violent extremist ideology. As early as 2011 the Columbus Dispatch reported that the number of Patriot groups, incl. self-styled militias, had grown from 13 to 27 in Ohio. In 2016/17, the presence of white-supremacist propaganda at colleges increased by 258%. Groups like Identity Evropa [sic], Patriot Front, and Vanguard America are some of the more notable ones. What these and other organizations have in common is the belief that America was founded by white people for white people. The Patriot Front has banners that read, "Americans are white. The rest must go." The group's manifesto claims that Blacks are "not Americans." Many neo-Nazi groups also target Jews, immigrants, feminists, and LGBT people. Supremacist ideology often leads to the demonization and dehumanization of minorities. They are harassed, laid off, separated from their families, criminalized, caged and chained, and killed or deported. As Nazi Germany has shown, the final solution may be downright genocide.

Even the most well-meaning man or woman must be reminded occasionally that all people are created equal. No one person, gender, age, race, nationality, religion, etc., should be regarded as superior or inferior to others. The dignity and sanctity of human life is an absolute, inviolable value. OWU President Rock Jones is absolutely right when he says that diversity, inclusion, and equity must never be compromised.

### **A Message from Rock Jones, OWU President**

*"Students, faculty, and staff this afternoon [11/1] have found on our campus a number of fliers, posters, and stickers representing a group that is defined by white supremacy. This material has been discovered on both the academic and residential areas of campus. Though I know we live in a world where we cannot escape hatred, I am deeply saddened and angry to see this material on our campus. The hate and prejudice expressed by such organizations are absolutely contrary to the values we hold at Ohio Wesleyan University, and the promotion of those ideas on our campus is deeply upsetting – and threatening – to many of us. It will not be tolerated.*

*I strongly encourage anyone who sees individuals posting this material or with knowledge about the distribution of this material to contact the Department of Public Safety at 740-368-2222. In addition, for anyone wishing to discuss the situation or seek support, I invite you to contact our Office of Multicultural Student Affairs, Counseling Services Office, or Chaplain's Office – all located inside Hamilton-Williams Campus Center.*

*Let us work together in pursuit of our shared commitment for an environment that is wonderfully diverse and fully inclusive."*

### **Board of Trustees Approves Honorary Degrees**

At the last meeting of the faculty President Rock Jones also announced that two nominations for an honorary degree from Ohio Wesleyan Univ. were approved by the Board of Trustees and that efforts are underway to bring the two individuals to campus. However, for various reasons (cost, health, time conflicts, etc.) such attempts have not always been successful. 1. Charles Bernstein (born 1950) is a groundbreaking poet, editor, critic, and literary activist affiliated with the Univ. of Pennsylvania. 2. Jose Antonio Vargas (born 1981) is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, filmmaker, and author of "Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen" (2018).



Below is the reprint of an entry in "Community Matters" (May 2019):



### **Jose Antonio Vargas – the Public Face for Undocumented Immigrants**

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, filmmaker, and immigration-rights activist was born in 1981 in the Philippines. He came to the U.S. at the age of 12 to stay with his grandparents, who were naturalized U.S. citizens. When Jose learned about his undocumented immigration status in 1997, he kept it secret. Even though it was impossible for him to apply for financial aid, he attended San Francisco State Univ., earning a degree in Political Science and Black Studies. He graduated in 2004 and immediately began to pursue a promising career as a journalist, writing for the "Washington Post" and later for the "Huffington Post." He covered video games, school shootings, digital technology, the HIV epidemic, racial relations, and more. Vargas revealed his status as an undocumented immigrant in 2011 in an essay for the "New York Times Sunday Magazine" and has since become a tireless advocate for the "Dreamers" and for immigration rights in general. Wikipedia correctly states that he "has become the public face of undocumented immigrants." Vargas has written and directed "Documented: A Film by an Undocumented American" (2013) and published his memoir "Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen" in 2018 (Dey Street Books, 261 pp.). He has received several awards for his work, including PEN Center USA's Freedom to Write award (2014) and an honorary doctorate degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York (2017). Vargas says, "I'm an American, I just don't have the right papers." It's time to change that and to give him and countless other Dreamers the opportunity to live their lives in peace and safety.

### **Highest-Compensated Employees at OWU**

The Delaware Gazette used to publish the names of the highest-compensated officers and faculty at OWU, but it hasn't done so in years. Below are the latest figures from Form 990, dated May 14, 2019. It is a public document. Several details have since changed. Chartwells (food service) and Aramark (housekeeping) have been replaced by new contractors, and Susan Dileno, Colleen Garland, and Lauri Strimkovsky have left the university. Searches for a new provost and vice president are underway. It should also be noted that every individual listed also receives "other compensation" from OWU. In the case of Dr. Jones it is an additional amount of \$116,556. The two highest-paid faculty members also perform administrative duties, in addition to teaching. Form 990 also indicates that OWU had an endowment of \$239.6 million at the end of the 2018/19 academic year.

Rockwell Jones, President -- \$332,360  
Colleen Garland, VP Advancement -- \$256,685  
Chuck Stinemetz, Provost -- \$200,803  
Susan Dileno, VP Enrollment -- \$187,869  
Lauri Strimkovsky, VP Finance -- \$181,224  
Dwayne Todd, VP Student Engagement -- \$149,030  
Brian Rellinger, Associate Provost -- \$152,331  
Linda Earle, New York Arts Program -- \$132,073  
Jodi Bopp, Capital Campaign Director -- \$129,371  
Harold Wiebe, Prof. Mathematics -- \$128,589  
Alice Simon, Prof. Economics -- \$127,790

### **Two New Exhibitions in Ross Art Museum**

OWU's Richard M. Ross Art Museum at 60 S. Sandusky St. just opened two new exhibits. They will remain on display until Feb. 9, 2020. The Ross is handicap-accessible and always free.

"Figuring Our Humanity: Ceramics and Prints" features prints from the permanent collection alongside contemporary ceramics that center the human figure. It is co-curated by Tammy Wallace and OWU ceramic professor Kristina Bogdanov. An opening reception will be held Sun., Nov. 3 (2-4 pm). A 2<sup>nd</sup> opportunity to visit

is Tues., Nov. 5; there will be a tour (6:30-7 pm) and a panel discussion (7-9 pm) with the editor of "Ceramics Monthly," artist Jim Bowling, and alumni Sarah Hahn & Stephen Hoskins.

"Bijoux Contemporains: Francophone Artists Reimagine Adornment" features the work of 13 contemporary jewelers from French-speaking areas of Europe & Canada. It was organized by Noel Guyomarch (Montreal, Canada) and developed in collaboration with Erin Fletcher, art teacher Prof. Cindy Cetlin, and French teacher professor Mary-Anne Lewis Cusato, with special contributions from students in Metals 1-3 and French 250. There will be a collaborator tour on Thurs., Nov. 21 (5-5:30 pm), followed by a reception from 5:30-7 pm.

### **Storm-Drain Net in the Delaware Run Removed**

The October issue of "Community Matters" described the 4-foot storm-drain grit & net that was installed in the Delaware Run near S. Sandusky St. last September to prevent trash, recyclables, and organic material from being washed into the Olentangy River. The project is unique and does have considerable merit, but it also created an impenetrable and insurmountable barrier for animals to migrate up and down the Delaware Run, which an important wildlife corridor. At last check the grid & net have mysteriously disappeared while the concrete foundation on which it rested remains. It is currently not known what the intention of the installers are; there has been zero communication. Perhaps they plan to reinstall an improved version of the grid & net in the foreseeable future. Ideally, that version will include space along the walls for larger vertebrates (esp. fish and reptiles) to travel through.

## **DELAWARE COUNTY AND CENTRAL OHIO**

### **Planet Oasis Now Arcadia**

The \$2 billion Planet Oasis project in Berkshire Township is now officially called Arcadia, named after an ancient Greek landscape of pastoral beauty and bucolic pleasure. A lawsuit between developers Tony Sekulovski (Blue Horseshoe Ventures) against his former partner David Glimcher and his company was finally settled in Delaware County Common Pleas Court. Judge James P. Schuck ruled that Blue Horseshoe holds all contractual rights and responsibilities related to the planned sports and entertainment complex. – There are no further updates. Berkshire Township, Delaware County's Regional Planning Commission, and ODOT have yet to hear from Blue Horseshoe Ventures. Sekulovski has previously stated that he would scrap the Ferris wheel, roller coaster, and saltwater lake. However, the mixed development that encompasses 350 acres would still include an indoor water park, a multisport facility, an ice rink, a skate park, a surfing attraction, a BMX bicycle course, and similar features as well as a myriad of restaurants and hotels. – Construction was to start in summer of 2019, but has obviously been delayed by at least one year.



Barn Owl

### **Deer Haven Adds Bird Aviary**

Deer Haven Park at 4183 Liberty Rd., one of Delaware County Preservation Parks' properties, is getting a new bird aviary. It will be built this winter near the visitor center and will open in spring of 2020. At display will be multiple birds of prey (e.g., falcons, hawks, kestrels, owls) and others. They are on loan by Ohio Nature Education ([www.ohionature.org](http://www.ohionature.org)) in Johnstown, a private nonprofit that provides homes for permanently injured birds, mammals, and reptiles that cannot be released into the wild anymore. It was founded by Manon VanSchoyck ("Mrs. Van"). The birds will be rotated on a quarterly basis. The new aviary will allow PPDC to expand its educational programming for schoolchildren, youth groups, and the public.

### **NAMI of Delaware & Morrow Counties**

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) Delaware and Morrow Counties offers a variety of educational classes, support groups, and special events for those with mental health symptoms and their loved ones. NAMI Family-to-Family class and Family Support Groups are for any adult who has loved ones who experience mental health symptoms. NAMI Peer-to-Peer class and Connection Recovery Support Groups are for any adult who has experienced a mental health condition. All of these classes and groups will help you learn to aim for better coping skills and understand that mental-health conditions are no one's fault and can be traumatic events. To find out when these classes and groups are, check out [www.notaloneohio.org](http://www.notaloneohio.org). NAMI is located at 814 Bowtown Rd. on Delaware's east side.



### **Julián Castro Visits Edith Espinal**

Edith Espinal, an undocumented mother from Mexico, has been living in the Columbus Mennonite Church in Clintonville for two years to escape deportation – since Oct. 2, 2017, to be exact. Espinal, 42, is the mother of 3 children and has resided in the U.S. for decades. It is the longest-standing sanctuary case in Ohio – no other immigrant in Ohio has lived in seclusion for so long. Presidential candidate Julian Castro was the only one of the 12 Democratic politicians who scheduled a visit to see her prior to the debate at Otterbein Univ. on Oct. 15. Perhaps the other candidates were too busy or thought that Espinal, one of the least among us, was not significant enough. That is unfortunate. Espinal told Castro her story in private and showed him her living space before they spoke publicly in the sanctuary. Castro, who fights for “folks who don’t have a voice,” promised to advocate for her and said that if he were president she would not be deported. Espinal, who hopes to get her freedom back one day, has tried for years to find a path toward resident status.

### **62 Ohio Artists at the Riffe**

The Riffe Gallery in Downtown Columbus has a juried exhibition that features works by 62 Ohio artists. The show opens Nov. 7 and runs through Jan. 10. The Vern Riffe Center at 77 S. High St. is open daily, except Sundays and on holidays. Admission is free. Visit [www.riffegallery.org](http://www.riffegallery.org) for details.

### **Delaware County Bird Club**

The Delaware County Bird Club meets monthly at the following times and places. The meetings are free & open to the public. They are normally held at Deer Haven Park, but because of on-going construction the Nov. and Dec. meetings will take place at Shale Hollow Park, located at 6320 Artesian Run in Lewis Center.

Mon., Nov. 18 (7 pm), Shale Hollow Park: “Iceland – Land of Fire and Ice (and a Few Birds, Too), with Amy Tovar;

Mon., Dec. 9 (7 pm), Shale Hollow Park: “Delaware Reservoir Christmas Bird County Overview,” with Rich Bradley;

Mon., Jan. 27 (7 pm), Deer Haven Park: “The Ohio Bird Conservation Initiative,” with Matthew Shumar;

Mon., Feb. 24 (7 pm): Deer Haven Park: “Birding the Arctic Tundra,” with Tyler Ficker.

### **Sunbury Votes on Charter**

The Village of Sunbury is expected to become a city of more than 5,000 after the 2020 census. On Nov. 5, residents voted on Sunbury's first charter, which acts as a constitution for cities. Voters approved the charter by a vote of 82.45% to 17.55%.

### **Columbus Landlord Convicted of Illegal Eviction**

Columbus landlord Stacy Kovalesky was fined \$500 after she violated the city's retaliatory-action law. A 90-day jail sentence was suspended, but she will be on probation for 5 years. The case arose when a tenant filed a complaint with the city about multiple problems with her apartment on Lechner Ave. The landlord informed the tenant that she would not renew the lease because of the code-enforcement complaint. Columbus has an ordinance that says a landlord cannot

evict someone, or raise rent, if the tenant files “a good-faith complaint” or reports conditions that might be a violation of a housing, building, health, or other code. City Attorney Zach Klein said in a statement, “Columbus will not allow landlords to retaliate against tenants who are living in unfair conditions.” Kovalesky has shown no remorse. According to the Columbus Dispatch, she claimed that “this is all bull---.”

About 18,000 eviction cases are filed in Franklin County every year, the most in Ohio. Saying that evictions are “a major problem in our community,” the City of Columbus launched a new Eviction Prevention Program in October. It includes expanded legal services as well as rental or mortgage help.

### **Discarded Cigarettes Can Cause Mulch Fires**

Last month, a portion of Culver's in Marysville was damaged following a mulch fire at the drive-through restaurant. The popular fast-food establishment was shut down for several days. A quick Google search revealed that discarded cigarettes are causing dozens of mulch and brush fires in the U.S. every year. In some cases, entire structures have burned down and were total losses. Besides kitchen fires, mulch fires are a major menace. Because fires can smolder for hours, there is sometimes no one around when flames erupt. – Obviously it would help if people smoked less. Perhaps signs and/or proper receptacles for discarded cigarettes and cigarette butts in the drive-through waiting lives would also help. In addition, smart restaurant managers might attempt to either keep mulched areas moist during hot, dry days or replace them with non-flammable material, such as sand or pebbles. At the very least, mulch should be kept away 1 to 2 feet from combustible building materials, such as wood, vinyl siding, and decks. There are many ways to reduce the frequency of mulch fires, but owners and managers need to be aware of the potential danger.

### **Pataskala Issues Development Moratorium**

The City of Pataskala in neighboring Licking County has approved a 6-month moratorium on new residential development. Plans already submitted, approved, and construction underway are not affected by the ban. City officials say the moratorium was needed to give the municipality time to update its comprehensive plan and study impact fees for developers. Like other cities, Pataskala is seeing a disconnect between growth & development and its limited ability to build and maintain the necessary infrastructure, especially roads. Pataskala is believed to be the only city in Central Ohio to have imposed such a temporary suspension of residential development. It comes as no surprise that the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Central Ohio, which rests on the foundation of eternal growth, is troubled by the message Pataskala is sending. According to the Columbus Dispatch (10/10), it is a clear sign that the battle between developers and municipalities is “escalating.” – The City of Delaware is facing more or less the same dilemma, by the way. It explains why the BIA has been very busy supporting the election campaigns of building-friendly candidates for township, city, and county boards and councils.



### **Longaberger's “Big Basket”**

The iconic Longaberger's “Big Basket” on Newark's east side (off Rt. 16) opened in 1997, but the company began to unravel after Dave Longaberger's death in 1999. The building has been sitting empty since 2016. In 2017, it was bought by Steve Coon & Bobby George of Cleveland for \$1.2 million at a fraction of what it cost to build it. It now appears that there may be a future for the Big Basket after all. Canton-based developer Coon of Coon Restoration & Sealants has announced that he plans to renovate the interior and reopen the building as “a luxury hotel” in 2020. Coon is a developer with a track record of preserving and restoring historic structures, but obviously the renovation would take an enormous amount of time and money. Many more bathrooms would have to be added, for instance. The 2020 timeline seems way too ambitious, and it is by no means clear that Newark needs a luxury hotel at a time of economic uncertainty and decline. Some skepticism seems warranted.

## **Watch Out for Deer**

Deer-vehicle crashes are a common occurrence in Ohio. There were 18,200 of such incidents in 2018. That's especially true in late fall when it is breeding season and deer are more active. Even in suburban areas, you see them wander across streets. Drivers need to be on high alert during the rut and slow down. Experts advise not to swerve to avoid a deer. When you veer, there is the possibility of hitting something even more dangerous, like another car or a tree. Brake firmly, and stay in your lane.

## **MORPC Recognizes Sustainability Efforts**

The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) recently recognized local community leaders for their sustainability efforts during its annual 2019 Summit on Sustainability. The event featured a variety of educational sessions on planning for an equitable region along with the presentation of the 2019 Sustainability Awards. Among those honored, Catherine Girves of "Yay Bikes!" is the recipient of the William A. Lewis Jr. Leadership in Mobility Award. This award recognizes an individual exemplifying outstanding work toward creating a world-class multi-modal transportation system for Central Ohio. Girves, a leader in the area of mobility, has influenced transportation policy by building relationships and experiences across socio-economic, professional & political lines. Catherine is that person that urges bike experiences in key places to help create a more sustainable and equitable multi-modal transportation system in Central Ohio. – Kurt Keljo of Franklin Soil & Water Conservation District was the recipient of the Leadership in Sustainability Award. This award recognizes an individual or entity exemplifying outstanding leadership and innovation in seeking comprehensive sustainability solutions to address key challenges facing the region. One of Keljo's innovative ideas is the installation of in-stream structures made from a recycled plastic matrix, which resulted in an increase of diversity of macroinvertebrates, the addition of sensitive species of aquatic insects, and the appearance of 6 species of fish in a stream that previously had no fish. With grant support, a 2<sup>nd</sup> insert project has been installed, a 3<sup>rd</sup> project is almost complete, and a 4<sup>th</sup> is soon to begin. – The Downtown C-Pass was presented the Collaborative Achievement in Sustainability Award. This award recognizes a group of entities or individuals who have shown effectiveness in producing environmental accomplishments through a collaborative effort. Capital Crossroads, MORPC, COTA & the many downtown businesses, property owners, and individuals have turned C-Pass from a groundbreaking idea to a real-life tool that is transforming the way that people commute to and from Downtown Columbus. While creating the first mobile pass for COTA, C-Pass has helped change perceptions of public transit in Columbus from that of a transportation tool and social service provider to that of an economic development tool. *[Information provided by MORPC]*

# **THE STATE OF OHIO**

## **Joblessness Rising in Ohio**

Reading lop-sided letters and op-ed pieces from Republicans creates the erroneous impression that under President Trump Ohio's economy is booming and flourishing like never before. The funny thing is that the experience of ordinary workers is quite different: wages are stagnating, the number of the uninsured is rising, and the affordability gap is widening. The unemployment rate was at 4.0% in June and July of 2019, but is now rising again amid job losses in manufacturing, construction, health care, and government jobs. The number of unemployed workers grew by 5,000 to 248,000 (4.2%) in September. Nationwide, the unemployment rate was 3.5% in September. Trump's tariffs have led to a significant slowdown in the world economy. In addition, Ohio's population is not growing and even declining outside Central Ohio. There are plenty of warning signs out there that predict an economic slump and perhaps a recession in 2020.

## **Ohio Bill Intended to Stifle Protests**

Ohio is one of the conservative states where ALEC and the fossil-fuel industry have an outsize influence. It comes as no surprise that the Ohio Senate has passed SB 33 with a vote of 24 to 8, which is designed to increase criminal penalties for "tampering" with critical

infrastructure (a 3<sup>rd</sup>-degree felony) or for showing up at facilities such as pipelines even when they are on public land or when protesters have the property owners' permission to be there (a Class A misdemeanor). The bill includes the energy sector, manufacturing, telecommunications, and transportation, but the intended target are people protesting against fracking and oil-and-gas pipelines. The bill also includes a provision that says any organization found to be "complicit" with tampering would face a \$100,000 penalty – enough to bankrupt smaller advocacy groups. The ACLU and other organizations are right when they say that the bill is intended to stifle and discourage freedom of speech and protest. In an editorial dated 10/19, the "Columbus Dispatch" agreed and said that protesting is not a crime but a civil right: "Ohio lawmakers should be more responsive to Ohioans and less compliant with big donors."

## **Tim Ryan Quits Presidential Race**

Ohio Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles) has announced that he is quitting the campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination. He will run instead for a 9<sup>th</sup> term in the House. Ryan failed to qualify for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Democratic debates and had almost no cash at hand, compared to his rivals. Even in his home state, Ohio, he has generated little enthusiasm, has failed to gain traction, and is largely unknown. – 17 candidates remain in the race as of Oct. 25, but more are contemplating a late entry. The 5<sup>th</sup> Democratic debate will be held Nov. 20 in Georgia, the 6<sup>th</sup> on Dec. 19 in California. – Emails from Tim Ryan's office indicate that he now supports the candidacy of Joe Biden.

## **Tim Ryan Promotes Sustainable Farming Practices**

While Tim Ryan is no longer a presidential candidate, it might be worth recalling some of his proposals. A centerpiece of his platform was his food & agriculture policy. Ryan supported what he called "regenerative agriculture techniques," such as no-till farming, cover crops, and other sustainable farming practices. He also said that the U.S. needs to strengthen and expand safety nets for farmers, such as crop insurance. He called for more federal funding to support local & organic farms as well as grants & tax credits for urban farms and grocers in food deserts to ensure healthier eating. In a statement he criticized the fact that that the overwhelming amount of subsidies go to big producers of corn, soybeans, and other crops while "only 0.45% goes toward fruits and vegetables." He says, "this is unacceptable."

## **Fracking Brine Not Safe to Use on Roads**

ODNR allows the use of salty brine waste from oil-and-gas drilling as de-icers on roads and streets despite the fact that the liquid contains levels of radium that far exceed those of fracking waste to be placed in landfills. Supposedly, radium is a naturally occurring byproduct. However, experts fear that the waste builds up over time, stays in the environment, and potentially contaminates groundwater. The ODNR says that there is no evidence that radium is occurring in the environment at harmful levels. The reason for that may be simply be that so far no one has tested for it. Both radium-226 and radium-228 are known carcinogens and can lead to bone, liver, and breast cancer. In addition, brine contains plenty of additional toxic chemicals, some of them secret, that can hurt the natural world and human health. Fracking waste should not be used on Ohio's roads and streets and released into the environment just because the fracking industry wants to save money by not disposing waste responsibly.

## **Youth Obesity in Ohio**

A new report released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation says that the obesity rate for Ohio preteens and teenagers is 17.1%. The national rate is 15.8%. Children in homes with lower incomes are more likely to be obese than children in more affluent homes. African-American and Latino children are thus more at risk than white and Asian children. To remedy the situation, health experts say that education and messaging are key. Efforts can include programming on healthy behavior and cooking classes. However, school-meal standards and access to free drinking water also play a role. In addition, easy access to healthy and affordable foods such as fruit and vegetables is important in so-called "food deserts." More sidewalks, bike trails, and parks are needed for physical activity.

## **Ohio Improves Safety of Amusement Rides**



It took a horrific accident at the Ohio State Fair, but Ohio has now tightened its amusement-ride oversight with a new law. On Oct. 23, the Ohio Senate voted 30-0 on a bill named for Tyler Jarrell, 18, who died when a gondola from the Fire Ball ride broke loose in 2017. The House approved the bill in June. Known as "Tyler's Law," is now going to Gov. Mike DeWine who is expected to sign it. The bill increases the number of inspectors assigned to amusement rides and also tightens inspectors' qualifications. The current 2-year state budget includes increased funding for ride inspections by 27% to \$1.82 million for this year and 6% to \$1.94 million for next year.

### **Ohio No Longer First for Metal Thefts**

In 2017 and 2018, Ohio was first in the nation for insurance claims tied to metal thefts. A new report from the National Insurance Claims Bureau indicates that New Jersey (#1) and Pennsylvania (#2) have surpassed Ohio for thefts of aluminum, brass, copper, and bronze. The only Ohio city in the nation's top 10 metro areas is Cleveland (#5) whereas Cincinnati and Columbus are no longer on the list. Nationally, claims have been declining since about 2012. The economy has picked up since the Great Depression, the number of vacant homes and abandoned cars is smaller, the price for copper has fallen, and Ohio has created an electronic data base for scrap-metal sales.

### **Drivers Running Red Lights**

Reckless or distracted drivers running red lights killed 937 people in 2017 – a 10-year high and a 28% increase since 2012. Nearly half (46%) of those killed were passengers or people in other vehicles, and more than 5% were pedestrians or bicyclists. In Ohio, during the past 10 years 216 people died from red-light running crashes, according to data from ODNR. A general bit of advice for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians is to always look both ways before proceeding when a light turns green. A green traffic light does not necessarily mean that it is safe to cross a street. – Traffic experts say that red-light cameras help reduce crashes. If placed strategically, calibrated correctly, and operated under the direct supervision of law-enforcement personnel red-light cameras can be effective. Red-light cameras installed with the intention to increase revenue, however, have been nixed by Ohio courts and legislators.

### **Ohio Repeals Pink Tax**

The Ohio House and Senate have repealed the controversial pink tax (also called "tampon tax" and "period tax") on feminine hygiene products, incl. tampons. Men never had to pay state taxes for their hygiene products, so this was also a discrimination and equity issue. Adult diapers for Medicaid patients will also be excluded from state taxes. Governor Mike DeWine has signed the legislation into law. The measure, which was a long time in the making, will save Ohio women nearly \$4 million per year. Ohio is now one of 15 states not to tax period products. The change will go into effect April 1, 2020. – For advocates, the repeal of the pink tax is just a start. They want to make tampons and pads available for free in schools, colleges, and public restrooms. And they want tampons and pads to be covered by WIC and food stamps.

### **Murray Energy Files for Bankruptcy**

As expected, Ohio-based Murray Energy became the 8<sup>th</sup> coal company in the U.S to file for bankruptcy this year. Founder Robert Murray, 79, is stepping down as CEO. The company has more than \$8 billion in actual and potential legacy liabilities, incl. pensions. To clean up all Murray mining sites in Ohio would cost more than \$200 million, but neither the state's coal reclamation fund nor Murray has that kind of money. Ohio's reclamation fund contains only around \$21 million. Environmentalists have long warned of this danger. A report issued earlier this year concluded that, if the top 5 holders of mining permits in Ohio abandoned their mines, the cleanup would be nearly \$560 million. This raises the specter of a massive bailout by taxpayers. – A decade ago, coal was used to produce half of the nation's electricity. Today it is 25% and expected to drop to 22% in 2020. Cheaper and cleaner natural gas has replaced coal, coupled with the proliferation of wind and solar energy. Bob Murray has funneled at least \$3.3 million to President Trump's campaign and political action committees (not to mention Ohio Republicans), but not even Trump can alter the harsh

reality of markets. His promise to save "beautiful coal" has always been wishful thinking.

### **Richard Strauss Mediation Talks Going Nowhere**

Ohio State University has made a lot of promises to help the hundreds of victims of former physician Dr. Richard Strauss, but their words remain empty. It tried to dismiss lawsuits, claiming that the statute of limitations applied. A judge has since referred the cases to mediation. However, these mediation talks with the university over the summer and in fall have gone nowhere, according to the victims and their representatives. They accuse OSU of stalling talks and staving off legislation (House Bill 249) that would clear the way for some 300 plaintiffs to proceed with their lawsuits against the university. The university claims it is committed to a fair resolution of the dispute, but the facts on the ground suggest otherwise. – At least 177 male students were sexually assaulted by Strauss while he was employed at OSU between 1979 and 1998. Victims say that administrators and coaches were aware of Strauss' misconduct, which was common knowledge, but ignored it and failed to stop it.

Multiple wrestlers and at least two referees have accused former OSU assistant wrestling coach Jim Jordan, now Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Urbana, of shrugging off reports of abuse and turning a blind eye. Jordan has denied knowledge of such incidences, but a former referee just filed a lawsuit against him in a federal court in Columbus, Ohio.



### **Cincinnati Christian University Closes**

Following a critical report by its accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, the Cincinnati Christian University (CCU) has announced that it will close its doors at the end of the 2019 fall semester. This gives the nearly 700 undergraduate students insufficient time to choose a new alma mater. (Some sources say the number of remaining students is as low as 400.) The private university, which offers "biblical education," has been flailing wildly in recent years, desperately looking for solutions. It explored possible mergers, started a new football program, and tried to cut costs by laying off faculty and staff. However, its retention and graduation rates continued to decline steadily. The institution has now spent the entirety of its \$4 million endowment and is \$8 million in debt. It did not help that the university's president, Ron Heineman, is a businessman with a troubled past and plenty of conflicts of interest, as reported by HLC and the Chronicle of Higher Education. The Board of Trustees has denied reports that Heineman, who is affiliated with the bank that has a claim to all of CCU's assets, will benefit financially from the demise of the 95-year-old institution.

### **Maurice Clarett Publishes Autobiography**

Disgraced football player Maurice Clarett, now 36, has published an autobiography entitled "One and Done: How My Life Started When My Football Career Ended." It chronicles his upbringing in Youngstown, his football years with OSU, and his nearly 4 years in prison following a struggle with depression, alcohol, and drugs. The low point came when Clarett was arrested in 2006 after a police chase. His SUV was stocked with weapons meant to kill people who would testify against him in a robbery case. While in prison, Clarett read and studied voraciously and reinvented himself. He was released in 2010 and has since become a businessman in Central Ohio where he started the Red Zone mental-health and addiction treatment centers in Youngstown and Columbus. In particular, he teaches young athletes strategies that will sustain them in the future. He co-wrote his book with Bob Eckhart, his English tutor and mentor at OSU. The self-published "One and Done" is not available on amazon.com, but Clarett is planning an official book launch on Nov. 19.

### **Buckeye Book Fair in Wooster (11/2)**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Buckeye Book Fair will be held Sat., Nov. 2 (9:30 am – 4 pm) in the Fisher Auditorium (1680 Madison Ave.) in Wooster, Ohio, just south of the city. Over 100 Ohio authors and illustrators will be in attendance to sign their books. (Please no books from home.) In addition, there will be speakers and literary activities.

Parking is free, admission is \$2 for adults. For more info, visit [www.buckeyebookfair.com](http://www.buckeyebookfair.com).

the day of the dead

all that remains  
are ghostly words  
like mingo scioto ohio

the people who spoke  
these ancient languages  
are long gone and forgotten

but the land is still filled  
with hidden messages  
and urgent whisperings

if you listen deeply  
you can hear their voices  
what are they telling us

## THE NATION

### Trump Rules by Executive Orders

Once upon a time Donald Trump and his Republican Party sharply criticized former President Obama for “constantly issuing executive orders that are major power grabs of authority.” “It’s a basic disaster,” he wrote in 2016; “our country wasn’t based on executive orders.” Now that Trump is in office, his tune has changed. At the latest count, Trump has issued 130 executive orders in the first 1000 days of his presidency compared to Obama’s 108 orders. It is difficult, however, to quantify the exact number of “executive orders” issued because Obama relied on memorandums and proclamations for some of his most controversial executive actions. For example, DACA protections for children brought into the U.S. as children came in the form of a memorandum. Trump, on the other hand, oftentimes makes his pronouncements by Twitter tweets. His actual legislative accomplishments are thin. – Are executive orders the way to rule a democratic country? Unlike legislation action, executive orders (however defined and in whatever form) have no staying power. As easily as they are created and proclaimed they can be overruled and rescinded by the next administration.

### Trump Resort Not G-7 Host Site in 2020

President Trump very much wanted his golf resort near Miami, Florida to be the site for the Group of Seven summit in 2020. Trump National Doral has experienced a net operating income decline of 69% from 2015 to 2017, and hosting the G-7 summit there would have been a boon for the Trump Organization. However, the optics looked bad, and after sharp national and international criticism from all sides the White House now says it is looking for new host site. In 2012, the summit was held at Camp David in Maryland, which is owned by the government. It is once again under consideration for the 2020 G-7 meeting. – Trump has also pushed for Russia to be readmitted to the former G-8 group after its membership was suspended due to Russia’s invasion and annexation of the Crimean peninsula in 2014. It is unknown where his request stands at the moment, but given current circumstances it seems doubtful that the G-7 group will lift the suspension any time soon. On the other hand, as the host nation the U.S. gets to decide the summit’s focus. Climate change is definitely out, a decision that has upset several allies. But Russia and Putin may be back in if the White House gets its way.

### White House Unprepared for Impeachment

Conservative strategists have criticized the White House for being inept and unprepared to handle impeachment. Stephen K. Bannon and others have said that labeling the inquiry “a witch hunt” and a “deep-state conspiracy” might suggest to the Trump base that it’s fake news without any evidence or substance. Bannon fears that it may lull Trump supporters into an unwarranted sense of complacency. The fact is, Bannon says, that serious constitutional charges are being brought against Trump, who is likely to be impeached. He warned not to underestimate House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, who “is a master, and

she is teaching a master class.” He also reminded the listeners of his radio show that polls showing majority support for impeachment are not lies. “There is a very serious failure to take this whole process seriously from the Republican side,” Bannon emphasized.

### Trump’s Downfall Getting Closer

What was inconceivable and unthinkable only a few months ago is now increasingly conceivable and thinkable. A growing number of members of the public, House and Senate Republicans, as well as Evangelical Christians are beginning to lose faith in President Trump. There are dark economic clouds on the horizon, impeachment proceedings are looming, and the White House’s inept foreign-policy choices are coming home to roost. The latest misstep and perhaps biggest occurred when President Trump cleared the way for Turkey to invade northern Syria, ushering in possible genocide against allied Kurds and Christians. That has caused a backlash like nothing else before. Televangelist Pat Robertson warned that Trump could lose “the mandate of heaven” with his decision to grant Turkish President Erdogan free reign. Republican lawmakers seem more and more weary of defending the indefensible and are getting worried that both the White House and the Senate could be lost in 2020, sending them into the desert for years to come. Although Trump’s shrinking base is likely to remain loyal to him until the bitter end, it appears that America as a whole has become disillusioned and disgusted with the unhinged man-child in the White House, his epic temper tantrums, and his unprecedented disregard for the truth. Suddenly, a Mike Pence presidency is no longer just chatter. The question now is how to get rid of Trump in a smart way that allows him to save face and resign gracefully and voluntarily, without appearing to have surrendered and capitulated after a lost war.

### Trump Lashes Out at Fox News

President Trump is upset that Fox News “doesn’t deliver for us anymore.” He recently complained that he had “never a good Fox News poll” and believes that Fox News, owned by Rupert Murdoch, has become less loyal and more hostile toward him than it used to be. Certain Fox anchors (e.g., Tucker Carlson, Sean Hannity, and Laura Ingraham) remain loyal to Trump, but it may be true that as a whole Fox News is trying to assert its independence more than it did in the past. For example, Fox News did not hesitate to publish the results of a poll on impeachment that showed 55% of Americans in favor of impeaching the president. It greatly angered Trump who seems to view Fox News as his personal propaganda apparatus.

On the other hand, Fox newscaster Shepard Smith announced on Oct. 11 that he is leaving the network in the middle of a multi-year contract. His announcement came one day after Attorney General William Barr met privately with media mogul Rupert Murdoch. Smith had attempted to maintain his independence in the past and frequently debunked statements made by Trump and his supporters. He expressed his hope “that the facts will win the day, that the facts will always matter, that journalism and journalists will thrive.” It is our hope as well.

### Homeland Security Chief Kevin McAleenan Resigns

Acting Secretary of the Dept. of Homeland Security Kevin McAleenan resigned on Oct. 11. He was reportedly frustrated with the negative image of Homeland Security under Trump and questioned some of the president’s senior appointments. In turn, Trump called into question his loyalty toward him. – McAleenan became Acting Secretary in April 2019, replacing Kirstjen Nielsen.

### Energy Secretary Rick Perry Plans to Resign

Energy Secretary Rick Perry has informed President Trump that he plans to resign by year’s end or even sooner. Perry, 69, has avoided major scandals, but he has increasingly become enmeshed in “Ukraine-gate,” which triggered the current impeachment push. Perry said his decision was not related to what happened in Eastern Europe. Trump immediately named deputy energy secretary Dan Brouillette as his replacement. Brouillette is expected to continue the White House’s focus on global energy dominance and fossil fuels.

### Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney

President Trump is considering replacing his acting chief of staff, Mick Mulvaney, amid frustration at the White House’s flailing

response to the impeachment inquiry. It is not clear if and when Mulvaney would leave, but various names are currently being fielded and vetted for the job. Mulvaney does have his supporters, but his position is precarious.

### **Hunter Biden Admits "Poor Judgment"**

Hunter Biden, the son of Joe Biden, has admitted "poor judgment" when he served on the board of Burisma, the Ukrainian fossil-fuel company, while his father was Vice President in the Obama administration. He also said he will resign from the board of a Chinese equity company by Oct. 31 and would forgo all foreign work if his father is elected president. There is no known evidence that Hunter and Joe Biden did anything illegal, but even the perception of a conflict of interest should be avoided. – The same goes for President Trump's adult children, of course. They are busy making deals around the world, benefiting from their father's name and connections. Ethics rules should prohibit a president's family from doing business with other countries while s/he is in office.



### **Trump International Hotel in Washington for Sale**

Three years ago, the Trump Organization bought the former post office on Pennsylvania Ave. and fixed it up for \$200 million. Ever since it opened in 2016, there has been a steady stream of criticism and lawsuits that accused Trump and his family of violating the emoluments clause of the U.S. Constitution by accepting payments at the 263-room hotel from foreign agents, businesspeople, lobbyists, and dignitaries. The hotel is now back on the market. The intent to sell may or may not be a ruse, but it comes at a critical and perilous time for Trump who is campaigning for reelection and subject to an impeachment inquiry. There is indeed a widespread perception that he has used, and abused, his political connections to help the Trump organization enrich itself. Fellow Republicans had to talk him out of the idea to host the 2020 G-7 summit at the Doral golf resort near Miami, also owned by Trump. It is not known if there is an asking price, and how much it is, but some estimates put the hotel's value as high as \$500 million. Buyers cannot be foreign governments, but private international citizens are not excluded from the pool of prospective purchasers. Ethics rules also require that the hotel sells for a fair market value and that the buyer is not seeking to gain favor with President Trump or the Trump Organization.

### **Joe Biden Is Low on Resources**

At one point, Joe Biden was the undisputed front-runner due to his seniority, centrist views, and affiliation with former president Obama. However, things have changed. Today, Biden is under attack from all sides, incl. his Democratic competitors. Some of them are doing better in polls than the former vice president. Biden is definitely vulnerable, and his financial situation reflects that. He has accumulated only a fraction of what Senators Warren and Sanders have banked and has also less than Pete Buttigieg and Kamala Harris. Major donors are hedging their bets, and small donations are not coming in. There is a sense among many that Biden is not going to make it and that he has already lost the March primary. The impending crash crunch is the reason why the Biden campaign recently changed course and abandoned its long-held opposition to a super-PAC. The donor class can transfer unlimited amounts of money to super-PACs that are independent of campaigns. This, in turn, will only increase people's skepticism about Biden who – in the eyes of many – represents the entrenched Democratic establishment. It did not help either that Biden has spent almost \$1 million on chartered jets, angering donors who might be looking for reasons not to support him. – The Biden campaign says their man is universally so known & liked that he does not need to waste money on name recognition. His representatives are supposedly not worried about money shortages. However, the facts on the ground speak a different language.

### **Andrew Yang Proposes New Metrics for Success**

A number of presidential candidates showed up at the Democratic Party's annual state dinner on Oct. 13 in Columbus, Ohio, among them Andrew Yang. An entrepreneur, Yang nevertheless said that America must learn to stop measuring success by solely using financial metrics such as gross domestic product (GDP). Instead, he said, factors such as health and life expectancy are more significant to measure a country's success and happiness.

### **Beto O'Rourke Bows Out**

Former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke has ended his Democratic presidential campaign after failing to generate donor enthusiasm. – Kamala Harris also appears to be struggling. She has downscaled her campaign and laid off some staffers.

### **Michael Bloomberg May Enter Race**

Former New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg is reportedly considering and preparing to enter the Democratic presidential primary. Billionaire Bloomberg, 77, has flirted with the presidency in the past, only to pull back in the end, so it is not entirely clear how serious he is. However, if he does enter the race, his personal wealth and centrist views would be an immediate blow to former Vice President Joseph R. Biden who is struggling. Bloomberg, a former Republican, has been an advocate for core liberal values, incl. battling climate change, but as New York mayor he has also supported charter schools and discriminatory stop-and-frisk policies. In addition, he has voiced skepticism against the #MeToo movement. He remains an unapologetic friend of Wall Street and tough-on-crime policies and would surely alienate the Democratic Party's populist base. Accusations that the wealthy are once again trying "to buy the presidency" can already be heard. More billionaires seeking more political power is probably not the change most Americans want and need. Many Democrats, incl. African-American voters, have indicated that they would never support Bloomberg.

### **Bernie Sanders Proposes Comprehensive Immigration Reform**

Senator Bernie Sanders is calling for comprehensive immigration reform. His proposals are among the most progressive offered by any of the Democratic candidates for president. Several have not even offered detailed immigration plans, incl. Joe Biden and Pete Buttigieg. If elected, Sanders would swiftly end all of President Trump's antiquated immigration policies. He would make undocumented immigration a civil rather than a criminal offense. All deportations would be halted until his administration has conducted a comprehensive audit of past and current policies and developed "best practices." Sanders would also break up ICE, the Immigration and Customs Enforcement, as many progressives have demanded. Cruel and inhumane family separations would end and asylum seekers would be allowed to remain in the U.S. while their cases go through the established process. As president, Sanders would not need congressional approval for his sweeping executive decisions. However, if he plans to offer "amnesty" to the almost 800,000 "dreamers" brought to the U.S. as children, he would need Congress to pass the requisite legislation. Pro-immigration groups say that Sanders' proposal was "the gold standard" of progressive immigration reform.

### **Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for Retirees**

Retirees will receive a modest 1.6% cost-of-living increase from Social Security in 2020. The mandatory COLA increase affects the household budgets of nearly 70 million people, incl. Social Security recipients, federal retirees, and disabled veterans. The average retired worker will see an increase of \$24 per month or a total of \$1,503, starting in January. Critics argue that COLA does not take into consideration disproportionately rising health-care costs for older people. Voters should note that Republicans have consistently resisted expanding Social Security. Some politicians are opposed to COLA, saying it is too generous.

### **Number of Uninsured Americans Rising Again**

The share of uninsured Americans fell under President Obama, but is now rising again under President Trump. The Census Bureau found that 27.5 million people, or 8.5% of the population, lacked health-insurance coverage in 2018. That was an increase of 1.9 million uninsured, or 0.5%. Though the increase was modest, it could be a turning point. The number of uninsured Americans is expected to



further increase in 2019. Health care is a leading Democratic issue and will play a major role in the upcoming 2020 presidential elections.

### **Elijah Cummings (1951-2019)**

Elijah Cummings, a native of Baltimore and representative of Maryland, died at the age of 68, following longstanding health issues. Cummings was a much respected politician who was firmly rooted in the Civil Rights movement. First elected to the House of Representatives in 1996, he was serving his 13<sup>th</sup> term when he passed away. House speaker Nancy Pelosi called him "a leader of towering character and integrity" and "a voice of unsurpassed moral clarity and truth." President Trump frequently lashed out at the former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, and called Baltimore "a rodent-infested mess" where "no human being would want to live" earlier this year. After Cummings' passing, however, Trump praised "the strength, passion, and wisdom of this highly respected political leader" who may be irreplaceable.

### **Illnesses Associated with Vaping on the Rise**

Vaping illnesses continue to grow by about 100+ cases per week and, at the latest count, have reached and exceeded 2,000. Forty people have died. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has announced that it has found "a very strong culprit" for the mysterious illness. Vitamin E acetate was identified in fluid from the lungs of 29 patients across the country. However, the CDC did not rule out other toxic substances.

### **Pedestrian Deaths on the Rise**

More pedestrians and bicyclists were killed in the U.S. last year than in any other year since 1900, according to a new study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The total number of traffic fatalities in 2018 was 36,560. Of those, 6,283 were pedestrian deaths (17.2%), an increase of 3.4% over 2017, and 857 were cyclist deaths (2.3%), an increase of 6.3%. Urban areas is where most of the trouble can be found. Distracted and/or drunken driving continue to be a contributing factor. Also, larger and heavier SUVs and light trucks are more prone than cars to run over pedestrians, rather than throw them over the hood. Residents in low-income neighborhoods are particularly susceptible to crashes as they are more likely to walk to jobs, stores, or public transportation. Their districts tend to be more neglected than others and may miss sidewalks, crosswalk markings, and traffic signals.

A spokesperson from the advocacy group America Walks (<https://americawalks.org>) expressed hope that the new data would encourage officials to make cities safer for walkers by lowering speed limits, improving traffic signals, and creating more pedestrian-only trails and spaces.

### **GM and UAW Reach Deal**

The United Auto Workers (UAW) strike at General Motors, which started Sept. 16, lasted for 5 weeks and only ended when workers approved a new 4-year contract by a vote of 57.2%. The walkout of almost 50,000 workers halted production at all of GM's U.S. factories and also impacted Canadian and Mexican manufacturers as well as up to additional 75,000 workers at auto-parts supply companies. According to analysts, GM lost close to \$3 billion in revenue. In exchange for wage increases, low-cost health insurance, a signing bonus, and job security for temporary workers, GM retained the ability to close down 3 factories, incl. the one in Lordstown, Ohio. Workers there overwhelmingly voted down the deal.

### **Amazon Attempts to Buy Seattle City Council**

Amazon's hometown is Seattle, Washington, where 7 of the 9 seats on City Council are up for election in November. In order to ensure a more compliant, business-friendly council, Amazon has so far invested \$1.4 million in the campaign cycle, made to the political-action committee (PAC) that's run by the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce. For Amazon, the biggest irritant is Councilwoman Kshama Sawant, a relentless critic of the company. Campaign data show that the Chamber's PAC has spent almost twice as much on direct mail, canvassing, and ads in her district than in any other. Sawant's campaign is accusing Jeff Bezos of wanting "to buy" City Hall.

On a much smaller scale, we are seeing attempts made by the Building Industry Association (BIA) of Central Ohio to buy its way

into township, city, and county boards and councils and get candidates elected who will do the BIA's bidding. At the last Delaware City Council meeting, Councilwoman Lisa Keller spoke of "a very disturbing trend of developers trying to influence not only this council but elected bodies throughout Delaware County." What companies and trade associations want is not always what is in the best interest of other stakeholders and for communities as a whole. Elected officials should of course carefully listen to what Amazon, the BIA, and other interest groups have to say, but at the end of the day Big Business should not dictate cities and counties how to conduct their affairs.

### **Rent Controls and Rent Caps**

A nationwide shortage in available affordable housing for low-and-moderate-income families is at least partially responsible for a rising tide in homelessness. An increasing number of cities and states have started to fight against gentrification and to entertain the idea of rent controls and rent caps. The practice is still banned in most states, but the tide may be turning. Earlier this year, Oregon has limited rent increases for most tenants to 7% annually, plus inflation. California imposed a cap of 5% after inflation and also requires landlords to provide "just cause" for any eviction. In other states, lawmakers are also considering rent-control legislation. – As rents have doubled and tripled in Delaware, City Council may wish to explore common-sense legislation that would impose reasonable limits on rent increases for businesses and tenants. There should also be a limit to how high landlords can jack up the rent for vacant buildings, once the previous tenant has moved out. Without such protections, many businesses and renters will find themselves squeezed out of buildings and neighborhoods. Such an exodus is not necessarily good for a community. Certain businesses will not be able to survive at all, which explains the absence of a grocery store in downtown Delaware, for instance. To ensure diversity and balance, rental space and housing stock for all income levels should be available.

### **Another Police Officer Accused of Murder**

"Police violence is also gun violence," said Julian Castro at the presidential debates at Otterbein Univ. on Oct. 15. He received applause for his statement, an indication that it resonated with the audience. Every year, about 1,000 people are killed by law enforcement, disproportionately people of color. In Fort Worth, Texas, former police officer Aaron Dean is facing murder charges after he killed a black woman, Atatiana Jefferson, 28. He shot the woman inside her own home while standing outside. Interim Chief Ed Kraus said that there was "absolutely no excuse" for the shooting. Dean, who is white and 34, has resigned from his position. He was released on \$200,000 bail less than 4 hours after his arrest. In another case in Dallas, Texas, a jury recently found former police officer Amber Guyger guilty of murder after she shot and killed a black man, Botham Jean, in his own apartment in 2018. It took several days before Guyger was arrested, causing much anger in the African-American community.

### **China, the NBA, and LeBron James**

Basketball player LeBron James has done a lot of good things in his life. In the past, "Community Matters" reported on the school for disadvantaged children he supports in his hometown Akron, Ohio. However, James also has deep, lucrative ties to China due to his partnership with Nike. He makes \$32 million annually just from his deal with Nike alone, according to "Forbes." Nike's revenue in China surpassed \$6 billion from June 1, 2018 to May 31, 2019. So when the general manager of the Houston Rockets, Daryl Morey, tweeted a statement in support of the anti-government protesters in Hong Kong, it created a huge headache for the NBA. China reportedly asked Morey to be fired for exercising his freedom-of-speech right, but NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said that there is no chance of that happening or even disciplining Morey.

At that point, LeBron James made a statement that may look anodyne to some, but for others it appeared as if he had caved in to China. He said, "we do have freedom of speech, but there can be a lot of negative things that come with that too," and "I also don't think every issue should be everybody's problem." Characterizing Morey's support for the Hong Kongers as "misinformed" and "a negative thing" that should have been censored did not meet a positive response in the U.S. He faced significant criticism and was accused of having "acquiesced to" and "bowed to" China. In a lengthy "USA Today"

article (10/19), it was said that James “came off looking like an apologist for an authoritarian regime that does not value human rights or freedom of speech.” In effect, he chose money over support for freedom and democracy. The danger is that his misstep may overshadow all the great things he has done so far. His brand and legacy, and that of the NBA and Nike, may be tainted forever.

Vice President Mike Pence recently also criticized the NBA for its cowardly stance and said that the league seemed to be “wholly owned” by Communist China and acted “like a subsidiary” of the socialist state.

### **“The Triumph of Injustice” (2019)**

“The Triumph of Injustice: How the Rich Dodge Taxes” is a new book (Norton 2019, \$27.95) by progressive economists Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman of the Univ. of California at Berkeley. It documents that the effective tax rate of America’s wealthiest families fell from 56% in 1960 to 47% in 1980 and 23% today. For the first time in history, America’s billionaires pay a lower effective tax rate than the working class (24.2%). The tipping point came in 2017 with the passage of President Trump’s Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which was a windfall for the ultra-rich. The new analysis differs from others in that it includes the totality of taxes people pay today, incl. \$250 billion of indirect taxes such as licenses for motor vehicles and businesses. In other words, the American tax system is no longer “progressive,” with the rich paying a higher tax rate than everyone else. America has turned away from this model to another one that serves the rich instead of the poor. In another part of their book, Saez and Zucman propose solutions to reverse this unfortunate trend and to once again achieve greater tax justice.

### **“A Warning” (2019)**

On Sept. 5, a senior Trump administration official published an anonymous op-ed piece in the New York Times that was critical of the president. He or she has now expanded the article into a 272-page book to be published on Nov. 19 by Twelve Books, a subsidiary of Hachette. “A Warning” is primarily a chilling character assessment of Trump. The unidentified author now says that it is a forlorn hope to constrain the emboldened president and his dangerous impulses. The publisher says the author will remain anonymous and will donate the proceeds to organizations fighting for the truth around the world. The author’s identity is not known, although there have been various attempts to identify him or her. It is not known if the author remains in the Trump administration, given the high turnover.

### **“Sanctuary Road” by Peter Moravec**

On Oct. 11-12, the Columbus Symphony and Chorus performed a remarkable new work by prolific composer Paul Moravec, “Sanctuary Road.” The work premiered in 2018 in New York’s Carnegie Hall and was brought to Columbus by Music Director Rossen Milanov, a friend of Moravec’s. “Sanctuary Road” is an oratorio that uses contemporaneous slave texts that abolitionist William Still collected in his monumental “The Underground Railroad Records” (1877). The libretto was assembled by Mark Campbell. The work features 5 soloists, 4 of them portraying various fugitives. The 5<sup>th</sup> singer is bass-baritone Dashon Burton as the Underground Railroad conductor. He was also the soloist in 2018. – Unfortunately, the work is not available on YouTube.

### **Who Is Ron Vara?**

Peter Navarro is one of the top White House economic advisers and a personal assistant to the president for trade and manufacturing policy. He has written a dozen books in which he frequently quotes the economic wisdom of Ron Vara, allegedly a gulf-war reservist and graduate of Harvard Univ. Vara also appeared in Navarro’s seminal book “Death by China” (2011) As it turns out, Ron Vara does not exist. He is a figment of Navarro’s imagination. Credit goes to an emeritus professor from Australia, Tessa Morris-Suzuki, for making the discovery. In fiction, it is of course common practice to let your fantasy soar, but in meticulously researched books written by academics (Prof. Navarro was affiliated with the Univ. of California, Irvine before joining the Trump administration) fabricated sources are inappropriate. Navarro made light of his deceptive behavior, saying it was only a joke and that it was “refreshing” that finally someone had figured it out. Many people, however, do not consider fake news a

joke. Trump’s trade and China policy is based on the advice of people like Navarro. Domestic and foreign policy grounded on flawed facts and unethical sources is deeply disturbing and profoundly problematic.



### **Meet Conan, a Belgian Malinois**

The Belgian Malinois has a great deal of intelligence, courage, and willingness to work. It is the preferred canine for law enforcement and the military. One of them, Conan, was used in the recent raid against a leader of ISIS in Syria, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who killed himself by detonating a suicide vest. The dog was wounded in the attack, but has since returned to service. President Trump praised the K-9 on television and tweeted out his photograph. The name is officially classified, but Newsweek, the New York Times, and other publications have since revealed it, but not the name of his handler. – Dogs continue to be man’s best friends in many ways. Police and military K-9s are used to sniff out drugs and bombs, for search-and-rescue operations, and for crowd management. A number of years ago, the president of the American Police Canine Association (APCA) estimated that as many as 600,000 canines worked various duties (USA Today, 10/6/16). Unfortunately, their jobs can be dangerous, and many have paid the ultimate price. For that reason, many animal-rights activists believe that no animals, incl. horses and dogs, should be used for military purposes.

The National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio has a traveling show on “Warrior Canines,” with 12 sculptures by Ohio artist James Mellick. It runs from Nov. 8 through Jan. 31. Admission is free.

### **Facebook Offers “Personalized News”**

“Facebook News” is coming to the U.S., according to full-page advertisements. Staying informed and connected is certainly important. However, what Facebook has in mind is information that is “relevant, personalized to your interests.” In other words, Facebook has no interest in delivering objective, factual, accurate, and truthful news. It will not expose you to a wider range of viewpoints. Instead, people get to pick their own tailored news à la carte. Of course, every kid want candy, cookies, and ice cream. But is that good for them? Wouldn’t they be better off with more nutritious and substantive items such as fresh fruit and vegetables? Facebook will give people what they want, not what they need. If you a socialist, Facebook will supply you with a steady stream of data that will cement your preconceived notions. If you are a neo-Nazi, Facebook will make sure you will see content that is curated and custom-tailored for you. If you are a capitalist, Facebook will ensure that you stay in your echo chamber and not be bothered by evidence that may shatter your peace of mind. If you are a religious person, no agnostic or atheistic piece of information will cross your doorstep. Whatever camp you are in, Facebook will safeguard your brain by protecting you against unwanted criticism. If you believe Earth is flat, Facebook will do its darndest to only send information your way that is “relevant, personalized to your interests.” The end result of stories that are “personalized algorithmically” may well be pad-locked minds and the continued polarization and radicalization of society.

Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg has recently affirmed that Facebook has no intention of censoring misinformation or intentionally false statements by politicians. The public, supposedly, has an interest in hearing the politicians’ lies. It is not surprising, then, that Facebook has come under intense scrutiny in recent weeks and months. Elizabeth Warren has called the company “a disinformation-for-profit machine.” The New York Times referred to Facebook as “the world’s leading incubator of falsehoods.” Facebook is certainly one of the reasons why democracy is currently in such peril.

### **Amtrak Sets New Records**

In fiscal year 2019, Amtrak had a ridership of 32.5 million. Its total operating revenue rose to \$3.3 billion, up 3.6% from 2018. The company has an aggressive plan to renew infrastructure and

stations, refurbish train interiors, improve and add amenities, enhance its safety program, and improve service reliability and customer satisfaction. All tracks that Amtrak owns now have the automatic-braking system known as Positive Train Control, and 93% of trains left their stations on time in 2019. Amtrak enjoys annual federal subsidies for diverting traffic from crowded highways and airports. Mass-transit systems are also effective to combat climate change.

### **More Americans with No Religious Affiliation**

The number of Americans with no religious affiliation is rising steadily. In 2009, 77% of Americans described themselves as Christian. Ten years later, in 2019, the figure is 65%. The portion that describes their religious identity as atheist, agnostic, or "nothing in particular" has risen from 17% to 26% in the same time period. Both Protestant and Catholic churches are experiencing declining church attendance, membership, and donations. In addition to the general trend toward secularization in all industrial nations, religious denominations have suffered reputational loss from huge sex-abuse scandals as well as rampant discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. Less than 50% of millennials describe themselves as Christian today.

There are those who say that many of the nation's problems are caused by a lack of faith in God. The opposite is true. The fact is that religious dogma and fanaticism has caused much conflict and countless wars in the world. As famous atheist Christopher Hitchens said in his 2007 book, "God Is Not Great," religion poisons everything and kills. Many atheists, on the other hand, are good and moral people who would not ever harm another person, an animal, or the environment, let alone start wars. We applaud any and all humanitarian efforts in the name of the world's religious leaders, incl. the great and inclusive teacher who goes by the name of Jesus Christ. But when church officials claim that even autocrats, dictators, and tyrants such as Adolf Hitler have "the mandate of heaven" and must therefore be obeyed, that is a bridge too far for many.



### **Marlboro Man Never Smoked**

"Marlboro Man" Robert C. Norris (1929-2019) died at the age of 90. The Colorado horse-and-cattle rancher was the face of the Marlboro cigarette brand for decades. He was depicted as a rugged, manly cowboy. The advertising campaign was successful, and in 1972 Marlboro became the world's leading cigarette brand. Ironically, Norris never smoked himself and eventually abandoned his role because he felt it was setting a bad example for his children. This was at a time when the surgeon general declared smoking a health hazard, which soon led to a ban on television and radio advertising for tobacco products. Norris and his wife Jane were also philanthropists with an affinity for the arts and animals.

### **Mother Cabrini, Patron Saint of Immigrants**

Frances Xavier Cabrini (1850-1917), better known as Mother Cabrini, was an Italian immigrant and Catholic nun who created health and social-welfare programs for poor Italian immigrants. She founded schools, orphanages, hospitals, and dozens of other institutions around the nation. She died in Chicago of dysentery and became a saint in 1946. For many, she is the patron saint of immigrants. If you haven't heard of Mother Cabrini, you are not alone. Her name only recently emerged again as part of a broader discussion about monuments and public art in New York City. Who should be included in the public halls of fame? Critics accused the City Council committee that oversees cultural affairs and the city's public-arts program as being myopic and racist. When Mother Cabrini's name was excluded from the list of honorees, along with people of color, protests erupted. Catholic bishops expressed their displeasure. Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the State of New York would pay for the statue if the City of New York, led by Bill de Blasio, would not do so.

the ship of state

america today is a sorry song

the country is no longer strong  
by wind and waves the ship was battered  
on the rocks it now lies shattered

the boat is wrecked beyond repair  
it is a sad and wretched affair  
fingers are pointed names are named  
builders owners captains blamed

corrupt and greedy leaders failed us  
into storms they recklessly sailed us  
the company can no longer be trusted  
the cherished dream is broken and busted

but some day a ship will rise again  
and will be steered by better men  
who have studied the stars and know the way  
and will lead the people not astray

it will be statelier than before  
and proudly sail forevermore  
into a future that is bright  
with full democracy in sight

## **THE WORLD**

### **Trump Abandons the Syrian Kurds**

President Trump has announced that he will withdraw the remaining American troops from northeastern Syria, following a phone conversation with Turkish president Erdogan. The move blindsided many in his administration and in Congress and was quickly denounced as a complete "disaster," even by many staunch Trump loyalists. The withdrawal of American troops in the region paves the way for Turkey to invade Syria, crush the Kurdish troops, and displace Kurdish civilians. Iran, Iraq, Russia, Syria, and Turkey stand to benefit from the reduced presence of American troops in the Middle East. The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) were the main U.S.- backed force in Syria to fight against IS / ISIS, but they are viewed by Erdogan as "terrorists." Although there are between 35 and 45 million of them, the Kurds do not have their own home country and are frequently seen as a threat to the countries they live in, including Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Trump's step is widely viewed as a betrayal and abandonment of a loyal ally and friend. It undermines American credibility around the world while propping up the region's authoritarian strongmen. Given the impeachment proceedings in the House, Trump needs the loyalty of Senate Republicans more than ever. In light of the national and international outrage, chances are that he will walk back the ill-informed and misguided measure at least in part.

It did not take Turkey long to start a full-fledged assault on northeastern Syria. On Oct. 9, it launched airstrikes, fired artillery, and moved ground forces across the border. It remains to be seen how catastrophic the outcome will be for the Kurdish troops and civilians. There are also some 50,000 Christians living in the area under attack, and it has been suggested that Turkey wants to annihilate them. Turkey's official objective is to create "a buffer zone" where Syrian refugees can be relocated, but another clear aim is to illegally gain and occupy new territory, similar to what Russia did with Crimea. Although it is Erdogan who ordered the military invasion, it is Trump who cleared the way and gave the green light. Whatever slaughter, war crime, and genocide occurs as a result of Turkey's operation is as much Trump's responsibility as it is Erdogan's.

### **Elections in Canada**

Despite significant character flaws, the Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Liberal Party won the Oct. 21 national elections on Oct. 21. The Liberals gained 157 seats while Andrew Scheer's Conservatives won 121 seats. 170 seats are needed to form a majority in the 338-seat House of Commons, so Trudeau will have to form a coalition. The outcome demonstrates that there are clear divides within Canada – between liberals and conservatives, between urban and rural areas, between the eastern and the western part of the country, and between English and French speakers. For example, Trudeau's party was completely wiped out in Alberta and



Saskatchewan where there is now talk of secession. The regional Bloc Québécois party, which advocates for Quebec's sovereignty, also had a remarkable result by winning 32 seats. On the other hand, Maxime Bernier's extreme-right People's Party ended up with zero seats in the Parliament. Canada was and is a vast and sparsely populated country that heavily relies on immigration. It has so far remained a country that welcomes refugees and immigrants.

### **Elections in Poland**

National elections were held in Poland on Sun., Oct. 13. The conservative Law and Justice party (PiS) and its leader, Jaroslaw Kaczynski, once again had a plurality of about 43%, followed by the liberal Civic Coalition party with 27.4%. Several smaller parties garnered 12% of the votes or less. It is assumed that Law and Justice will continue to rule the country for another 4 years, with or without a coalition. – Like Hungary and other East European states, Poland has moved to a more authoritarian and autocratic state rule. It has undermined the court system and the rule of law; television & radio stations have been turned into propaganda outlets for the ruling party; and Poland's Roman Catholic church has been co-opted to support the conservatives. On the other hand, Law and Justice has also undertaken genuine populist measures to win the people over. It has vastly expanded the welfare state and now gives families \$125 for every child. Many residents in underdeveloped areas of Poland felt neglected, abandoned, and betrayed by past governments. The example of Poland shows that it is possible to win such people over by paying attention to them and showing them generosity.

### **Early Elections in Britain Likely**

A Dec. 12 snap election in the United Kingdom is likely after Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party agreed to Boris Johnson's plan. Johnson's conservative party is ahead of Labour in the polls, but there are also two other opposition parties (the Liberal Democrats and the Scottish National Party) that have a word to say. "Brexit" will be a major focus in the election. Johnson wants to get Brexit done while his opponents are hoping for a second referendum. – The UK has not had a general election in dark and dreary December since 1923. The sun rises late and sets early, and the elderly may be reluctant to venture out in the foggy twilight. In addition, university students will be home for the holidays, reducing the turnout of a segment of the population that is more inclined to vote pro-EU. The European Union has granted Britain another extension to negotiate a deal. As the country muddles on, one wonders if there will ever be a resolution.

### **German Shooter Attempts to Storm Jewish Synagogue**

A heavily armed shooter attempted to storm a Jewish synagogue in the East German city of Halle on Oct. 9. When he found the doors locked, he went on a rampage outside, killing 2 people. Stephan Balliert livestreamed his attack, saying "the root of all evil is the Jew" and that "the Holocaust never happened." He also published an online manifesto, written in English. Investigators were surprised to learn that the man was able to amass several pounds of explosives and acquire 4 firearms in a country where such things are banned and strictly regulated. Little is known about Balliert, 27, who lived with his mother in the small town of Benndorf outside Halle. He did not have a criminal record and had not been on the radar of police.

Even though the attack failed, as a result of it is likely that Germany will increase police presence around Jewish synagogues and Muslim temples. There has been a 20% increase in anti-Semitic crimes in 2018, but for decades German authorities have been slow to respond to domestic right-wing terrorism and have done a poor job monitoring extremist channels online. While the police have historically kept a close eye on suspected leftist extremists, they regularly looked the other way when rightist extremists were involved.

### **Israel's Netanyahu Fails to Form Government**

Netanyahu was unable to form a new coalition government after the Sept. 17 election. Now his chief rival Benny Gantz, a former career soldier, has 28 days to gather a majority of 61 seats. Gantz' Blue and White party had one more seat than Netanyahu's Likud party after the last election, but he too will struggle to accomplish his goal. If he fails, there may be an unprecedented 3<sup>rd</sup> election within one year. Another option is the creation of a unity government between Blue and White and Likud, but Gantz has ruled out that possibility as long as

Netanyahu is under indictment for bribery and other crimes. If, on the other hand, Gideon Saar or someone else becomes Likud leader in the foreseeable future, a grand coalition or unity government might be a workable solution.

### **Violent Unrest in Chile**

An increase in the subway fare has led to mass demonstrations, riots, looting, arson, deaths, the shutdown of the entire subway system, and commuter chaos in the capital of Chile, Santiago, and other towns. For the first time that Augusto Pinochet's military dictatorship ended in 1990, soldiers in tanks patrolled the streets after President Sebastián Piñera declared a state of emergency and imposed a curfew. The unpopular subway-fare hike triggered the unrest, but for many people it merely was the last straw. The cost for utilities and other things keep going up in Chile while wages remain stagnant. Government officials called the demonstrators "vandals," "delinquents," and "criminals" and announced higher penalties. However, in the end Piñera said he would repeal the subway-fare hike that prompted the violence. The protests worked, and the people won. Too bad lives were lost and the damage was in the millions. Chile was preparing for 2 major international conferences – an APEC summit in November and the U.N. Climate Change Conference in December – but both events have since been relocated to other countries because of the unrest. The government acted wisely by quickly rescinding the transportation increase, but it would have been even better if it had not imposed the fee increase in the first place. It demonstrates how disconnected billionaire Piñera and his government is with the populace. Chile is among the countries with the worst economic inequity in the world.

### **Bolivia's President Resigns**

Early results of the Oct. 20 elections suggested that there would have to be a runoff election between Bolivia's President Evo Morales and his main rival, former President Carlos Mesa. However, there was a one-day interruption in the counting results after which Morales miraculously emerged as the winner. Accusations of election manipulation and fraud have led to protests and riots throughout Bolivia. The Organization of American States (OAS) disputed the results and called for a second round of voting in December. Criticism also came from North America and Europe. Morales, an indigenous leader, has grown increasingly more authoritarian and has been accused of squandering money on a new 29-story presidential compound, which he travels to by helicopter. Many Bolivians believe that Morales will never leave peacefully and are bracing themselves for bloodshed. – **Update:** Amid massive street protests and open mutiny by police forces, Evo Morales has resigned after the military urged him to do so. He was granted political asylum in Mexico.

### **Millions in North Korea Malnourished**

According to the United Nations, some 11 million North Koreans suffer from malnutrition. Close to half of the population of 25 million suffers from food insecurity. Among them are 140,000 emaciated children. Human-rights investigator and rapporteur Tomas Ojea Quintana from the United Nations says North Korea's economic and agricultural policies are responsible for the situation and added that some 30,000 children face "an increased risk of death." Kim Jong Un and his father have long prioritized the military over food supply and health services. As resources are diverted away from ordinary people, conditions in North Korea are dire. Malnutrition makes children in North Korea shorter, thinner, and weaker than children in South Korea, and they may also be underdeveloped intellectually. Numerous defectors from the totalitarian system have been found with fully grown parasitic worms in their intestines and countless other diseases. – The U.S. is of course a very different country than North Korea. However, here too we find a system that pumps some \$600+ billion annually into military hardware while depriving ordinary people, including children, of basic nutritional, educational, and medical services.

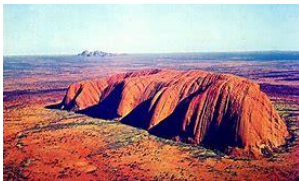
### **Armenian Genocide Acknowledged**

Furious with Turkey's invasion of northern Syria, the U.S. House of Representatives voted by a 405-to-11 vote to formally recognize the Armenian genocide that the Ottoman Empire committed in 1915. An estimated 1.5 million Armenians were killed at that time.

Turkey has long opposed any suggestion that Ottoman Turks committed genocide through atrocities, killings, and starvation. Because Turkey is an ally and member of NATO, a succession of American administrations have resisted passage of genocide resolutions. The vote is also a bipartisan rebuke of President Trump's decision to withdraw American troops from northern Syria and thus abandon the Kurdish forces that helped the U.S. fight ISIS. – Under President Erdogan, Turkey is moving further and further away from the European Union, from NATO, and from the West in general. A suspension of NATO membership does not seem imminent because the country still very much depends on Western military aid. However, as Turkey moves closer and closer to Russia, a "Turkexit" from NATO is not inconceivable in the long run.

### **Nobel Prize in Economics**

The 2019 Nobel Prize for Economics went to 3 researchers who have been working in the area of global poverty and have improved the lives of millions of people. All three teach at U.S. universities and are best known for expanding the method of randomized field experiments. Groups of people are randomly divided and exposed to different conditions, e.g., educational delivery systems or women's participation in social life. These interventions can then be qualitatively evaluated and quantitatively measured for their effectiveness. Esther Duflo (born in France) and Abhijit Banerjee (born in India) teach at MIT and are married, Michael Kremer works at Harvard. Duflo is only the second woman who has won the Nobel Prize in Economics.



### **Australia's Uluru (Ayers Rock) Now Closed to Climbers**

Uluru, the otherworldly red rock in Australia's Northern Territory that was formerly called Ayers Rock, was closed to hikers effective Oct. 26. The indigenous population, the Anungu people, have long demanded that the elevation be put off limits for outsiders because they revere the mountain as sacred. Uluru came to symbolize the struggle for indigenous rights in Australia. The closure of the landmark marks a spiritual and symbolic victory for Aborigines, but does little to improve the systemic neglect, poverty & marginalization of them. – Not all Australians were happy about the ban. Some have argued that Uluru is part of a national park and therefore belongs to everyone. In the days before the ban went into effect, hundreds and thousands of people formed long queues to clamber up the steep 1,141-foot mountain one last time.

### **Literature Nobel Prizes for Olga Tokarczuk and Peter Handke**

The 2018 and 2019 Nobel Prizes for Literature were awarded to Olga Tokarczuk (Poland) & Peter Handke (Austria). Both are prolific and influential writers. Each prize winner will receive 9 million Swedish kronor (about \$918,000) at a ceremony on Stockholm on Dec. 10.

The Polish novelist Tokarczuk, born in 1962 and now 57, is a beloved writer and outspoken critic of right-wing thinking. She is also a feminist, vegetarian, and activist. She published her first novel, "The Journey of the Book-People," in 1993 and achieved a breakthrough with "Primeval and Other Times" (1996). In 2018, she became the first Polish writer to win the Man Booker International Prize for "Flights." Her novel "The Books of Jacob" (2015) was sharply criticized by nationalist groups, and Tokarczuk received death threats. The Nobel Prize, awarded days before the latest national elections in Poland, will hopefully strengthen both her resolve and her stature.

The Austrian writer and philosopher Handke, born in 1942 and now 76, started out as an experimental playwright, but has since gravitated to more conventional and contemplative prose narratives. He has been living in Paris, France for decades. His mother was Slovenian, which led to a growing interest in Slavic culture and visits to areas in former Yugoslavia. One of his 70 or so books – "A Sorrow beyond Dreams" ("Wunschloses Unglück") – is based on his mother's suicide in 1971. Handke has been accused of being an immoral

apologist for Slobodan Milosevic (1941-2006), the authoritarian former leader of Serbia. However, that is a reductionist view. Handke is a man of peace, not of war. His literary oeuvre is rich and vast, his philosophical insights unique and profound, and he deservedly won the Nobel Prize.

## **CLIMATE CHANGE**

### **U.S. Prepares to Leave Paris Climate Accord**

The U.S. government is deep in the pockets of the fossil-fuel industry. One of President Trump's campaign promises was to abandon the landmark Paris Climate Accord of 2015, a collection of voluntary pledges from about 200 nations. Countries are not legally bound to meet their stated targets, but they are expected to make steady progress in the reduction of emissions. Membership in the Paris Climate Accord does not infringe upon a country's sovereignty, as is often claimed by conservatives. Under the rules of the agreement, Nov. 4 was the earliest date on which the Trump administration could submit a written notice that it is withdrawing from the pact. The U.S. is now preparing to submit such a statement, which would go into effect exactly one year later. This could make the Paris Climate Agreement a major issue in the coming presidential elections. It also renders the U.S. an outlier and rogue nation. – Environmental groups such as the youth-led Climate Mobilization called the decision "a betrayal of the next generation."

### **Arctic Circle Assembly Meets in Iceland**

The Arctic Circle Assembly met on Oct. 11 in Reykjavik, Iceland. Some 2,000 participants represented 60 countries. Climate change and its impact on the Arctic was a major topic of conversation. The Governor of Maine, Janet Mills, presented a speech in which she urged the Arctic nations to share research and work together, to mitigate the disastrous effects of climate change on natural resources, the economy, and human health. She said the very survival of our planet is at stake.

### **High Mountain Summit in Switzerland**

Mountains are the "water towers" of the world, providing drinking water, irrigation water, and river transportation to billions of people downstream. However, the world's alpine regions are under pressure from climate change. Glaciers are retreating, threatening the steady supply of water, food security, and biodiversity. For that reason, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) convened a High Mountain Summit in Geneva, Switzerland from Oct. 29-31. The idea was to hold a high-level dialogue among stakeholders to discuss the impact of climate change in the mountains and downstream regions and to develop an action plan. As they emerge, Community Matters plan to provide more details about the summit in an upcoming issue.

### **Jane Fonda Gets Arrested At Climate-Change Rallies**

Decades ago, Jane Fonda demonstrated against the Vietnam War. Now 81, she is back in the streets, protesting against climate change. She says she is inspired by Greta Thunberg, the writings of author Naomi Klein, and others. On both Oct. 11 and 18, she was arrested on Capitol Hill on charges of unlawful demonstration, along with 16 other mostly older demonstrators. Climate change is the shibboleth today just like the Vietnam War was the dividing line in the past. Establishment politicians and industrialists are badly failing the test. – Not much has changed in the country since the 1960s and 1970s, the time of Martin Luther King Jr. Following your moral conscience, exercising your constitutional freedom of expression, and practicing peaceful civil disobedience still gets you arrested while countless corrupt, immoral, and self-enriching politicians operate not only with impunity but are lauded by some as having "the mandate of heaven." This clearly shows where American values are and that the criminal-justice system is part of the toxic swamp.

### **Citizens' Climate Lobby – Delaware Chapter**

Three members of the Delaware chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby (CCL) and one from the Columbus chapter met with staff of OH-12 Rep. Troy Balderson at his office in Worthington on Oct. 29 to discuss the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act. With them

was a national CCL leader, Elli Sparks. CCL will be working to build support for the bill in Congress, and to emphasize the several thousand economists, including conservatives, who support a price on carbon as the most powerful way to cut carbon emissions. – While in Central Ohio, Elli Sparks was also the presenter at local CCL meetings in Delaware and on the Ohio Wesleyan campus.

## HAPPY NEWS

### More Employers Assist with Repaying Student Loans

Americans own about \$1.5 trillion in student loans – a staggering amount that weighs heavily on millions of adults. Almost 60% of college graduates have taken on debt – about \$28,500 on average. A growing number of employers are willing to help and offer assistance as an added benefit to recruit and retain top personnel. Companies that have piloted such programs note significantly less turnover. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, about 8% of employers currently offer assistance with repaying student loans. Some offer a flat amount, others match the employee's contribution. – Next time you are on the job market, don't hesitate to ask your prospective employer if they have a loan-repayment assistance program or if they are willing to create one.

### Alabama's Montgomery Elects First Black Major

Alabama's capital, a city of 200,000, is 60% African-American, but Montgomery never had a black major – until now. Probate judge Steven Reed was elected with 67% of the votes to be Montgomery's next mayor. His opponent, white television station owner David Woods, conceded and encouraged his voters to support Reed because, he said, a united city is stronger than a divided one. Reed is a graduate of Morehouse, a historically black college (HBC) in Vanderbilt. His victory is remarkable because to this day Montgomery is suffused with its Confederate legacy. – Birmingham, Selma, and Talladega also have black mayors.

### Dick's Sporting Goods Destroys Guns

In the wake of mass shootings, Dick's Sporting Goods has destroyed over \$5 million in military-style, semi-automatic rifles. In an interview, CEO Edward W. Stack stated that the company is even contemplating whether it would continue to sell any guns at all in its more than 720 stores. Previously, the Pennsylvania retailer also banned the sale of military-style rifles in its 35 Field & Stream stores. It also banned the sale of firearms and ammunition to anyone under the age of 21. The paradigm shift cost the company a quarter of a billion dollars, according to Stack. – It is gratifying to see sellers for which profit is not the highest value and that weigh the moral consequences of their activities. Let's support companies that are socially responsible.

### No Music for ICE

380 musicians have pledged in an open letter to cut all business ties with Amazon over its Amazon Web Services (AWS) subsidiary. AWS has cooperated with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) in areas that include facial-recognition technology and where human-rights abuses were alleged to have occurred. There is a very dark side to Amazon and other tech companies (incl. Apple, Facebook, and Google), which increasingly are coming under sharp attack.

### Journal of Controversial Ideas

BBC reported on 10/9 that a new publication, the Journal of Controversial Ideas, will be launched later this year. It permits authors to publish nonconformist ideas anonymously. Too often, scholars and scientists are attacked, threatened, defunded, fired, and even jailed if they put controversial ideas in writing. One of the editors is Peter Singer from Princeton Univ., which suggests that the journal will focus on liberal issues. However, Singer emphasized in an interview with BBC that the publication is open to a wide spectrum of ideas, incl. some that the editorial board hadn't even thought of. Submissions will be peer-reviewed to ensure academic quality and high accuracy. There is a website, [www.journalofcontemporaryideas.org](http://www.journalofcontemporaryideas.org), but at last check it was not yet up and running.

### United Kingdom Bans Fracking

Prime Minister Boris Johnson's government has announced a temporary halt of fracking in Britain after the Oil and Gas Authority concluded that it could not rule out "unacceptable" consequences for people living near fracking sites. Among the quoted risks were contamination and earthquakes. Fracking is controversial in the densely populated country. The ban was welcomed by environmental groups. However, it is possible – perhaps even likely – that the decision is only an election stunt to deprive opposition parties of a campaign issue prior to the Dec. 6 general elections. Johnson, a conservative, has been an ardent supporter of hydraulic fracturing. – A government watchdog group found that the British government has invested some \$41 million in fracking since 2011, with little to show for it. Fracking is banned in France and Germany.

### Peace Nobel Prize for Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia

Since coming to power in April 2018, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed has pushed through a number of sweeping changes. He ended a brutal war with neighboring Eritrea, which opened "a new era of peace and friendship." He released political prisoners, lifted bans on political dissidents, ended media censorship, reined in entrenched security services, increased the influence of women, and promised free elections. His reforms earned him international praise, but also a number of powerful internal enemies who saw their interests harmed. Various assassination attempts have targeted him. – Abiy Ahmed, 43, has now won the Peace Nobel Prize for his attempts to bring peace and progress to Ethiopia. His work is not finished, of course, and critics have argued the award is based on aspirations rather than achievements. However, the Norwegian Nobel Committee believes that Abiy Ahmed's reforms need to be recognized and encouraged so that he continue on his path to bring peace, unity, and justice to Africa and serve as a role model to the world.

### New York City Bans Foie Gras

New York City lawmakers passed a bill last month that bans restaurants and grocery stores from selling foie gras, the fattened liver of geese and ducks. The method to produce foie gras, considered a delicacy, involves force-feeding by means of a tube and is considered cruel and abusive by animal-rights groups. Mayor Bill de Blasio is expected to sign the bill, which would go into effect in 2022.

### Goats as Fire Fighters

As California is burning, a hungry herd of 500 goats has helped save the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library near Los Angeles from the wildfires. In May, the library hired the goats to clear flammable scrub surrounding the complex as a preventative measure. The goats ate the brush, creating a fire break that in October slowed the flames and gave firefighters extra time to react. The library was threatened by the Easy Fire, the latest in a spate of fires causing evacuations and power cuts across the state. The caprine fire fighters helped save exhibits including an Air Force One jet and a piece of the Berlin Wall. "We were told by one of the firefighters that they believe that fire break made their job easier," a library spokeswoman told the news agency Reuters. The goats were hired from a local company to clear around 13 acres of land. Scott Morris started the company last November and charges around \$1,000 per acre of land. As California continues to have more wildfires, Morris says he will need to double his current herd of 805 to meet demand.

### Dog Owners Live Longer

Dog ownership is linked to a significant reduction in the risk of heart disease and death. For most people, that intuitively makes sense. Dog owners, who walk their animal in rain and shine, get more exercise, which is good for their heart health. Having a dog as a loyal companion and friend also improves one's mental health and reduces stress, anxiety, loneliness, and depression. A dog is also a way to socialize with neighbors or other dog owners. In addition, taking care of a dog teaches children the importance of maintaining a healthy routine and a steady schedule despite occasional adversity.