

Rain doesn't dampen

From Pg. 1



Visitors meet a tortoise during an Animal Experience with the Oglebay Good Zoo Saturday, May 3 at Piatt Park.

as the hike neared its conclusion, but the dense canopy of the forest helped keep the hikers dry on their way back.

The day wasn't quite done as they reached the shelter as they were greeted by three animal friends, a tortoise, an armadillo and an opossum as part of the Oglebay Good Zoo's Animal Experience.

The event was the first of three hikes geared at boosting mental health in the southeast Ohio area.

A beginner course Mental Health Mile will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 10 at Sally Buffalo Park in Cadiz and a moderate course Mental Health Mile will be held from 9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 17 at Memorial Park in St. Clairsville.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO NO LONGER TAKE ORDERS FOR BASIC LOCAL SERVICE FROM NEW CUSTOMERS BY AT&T OHIO

AT&T Ohio ("AT&T") has filed with the Federal Communication Commission ("FCC") an application to no longer take orders for Basic Local Exchange Service from new customers in the Aberdeen, Arabia, Atwater, Beallsville, Belfast, Bellaire, Bloomingville, Belpre, Bloomingburg, Burton Oh, Barnesville, Bowersville, Cedarville, Chagrin Falls, Cheshire, Columbus 44, Canal Fulton, Conesville, Christiansburg, Corning, Carroll, Castalia, Duffy, Philo, Donnelsville, Dresden, East Canton, East Liverpool, East Palestine, Franklin, Fultonham, Fletcher Lena, Fairborn, Five Points, Glenford, Gnadenhutten, Graysville, Hillsboro, Jeffersonville, Jamestown, Kirtland, Lowellville, Lindsey, Louisville, Leetonia, Leroy, Maumee, Guyan, Magnolia, Manchester, Mingo Junction, Mantua, Monroe, Marlboro, Marshall, Murray City, North Hampton, New Holland, North Industry, North Jackson, Nelsonville, Navarre, Newcomerstown, New Lexington, New Middletown, New Matamoras, Newport, New Riegel, New Waterford, Patriot, Piqua, Pitchin, Rogers, Rio Grande, Rainsboro, Ripley, Roseville, Rootstown, Rushville, Sebring, Scotland, South Charleston, Sedalia, Sugar Grove, Sugar Tree Ridge, Shawnee, Somersett, South Point, Spring Valley, South Solon, South Vienna, Tiffin, Thornville, Toledo Downtown, Tremont City, Trenton, Uhrichsville, Upper Sandusky, Vinton, Washington Court House, Whitehouse, West Jefferson, West Lafayette, Wellsville, and Winchester exchanges. Effective on or after March 17, 2025, pending regulatory approval, AT&T will no longer take orders for Basic Local Exchange Service from new business and residential customers in these exchanges. Existing business and residential customers will retain their existing service, but will not be allowed to move, add to, or change it. AT&T's application was filed with the FCC on January 31, 2025. AT&T's notification filing with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio ("PUCO") will be submitted on or after March 18, 2025.

If you are an existing AT&T Ohio residential Basic Local Exchange Service customer and have any questions or need more information about changes to your local residential service, please contact AT&T's Customer Care Center toll-free at 1-888-994-7035.

If you are an existing AT&T Ohio business Basic Local Exchange Service customer and have any questions or need more information about changes to your local business service, please contact your AT&T Account Manager or AT&T's Customer Care Center toll-free at 1-800-321-2000.

For additional information regarding AT&T's application, customers may contact the PUCO or the Ohio Consumer's Counsel ("OCC"). The PUCO can be reached at 1-800-686-7826 or online at <https://puco.ohio.gov> and the OCC can be reached at 1-877-742-5622 or online at <https://www.occ.ohio.gov>.

Ring's 'Watermelon

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Yvonne Reusser won two categories, taking first in Watercolors for "Alstromeria" and mixed media for "Glory to God."

Mary Moore was second in Watercolors for her piece "Building on Water" and Shirley Weber was second in missed media for "Blue Wave."

Jack Norman was first in Acrylic for "On the Farm," with Belva Blackstone taking second for "Whispers of North."

Blackstone took first in the Decorative Arts category for "Teacup." Judy Hamilton was second for "Pumpkin Center."

Tom Carpenter was first in the Photography category for his piece, "Bryce Canyon." Renae Scheiderer was second for "Spring Bird."

Patricia Burgess took first and second in ceramics for "Blue Vase" and "Blue-Green Vase," respectively.

Lisa Matin won the Sculpture category for her piece, "Pelican." Weber was second for "Ocean Ice."

Hazel Freeman was first in Fabric - Fiber category for "Botanical Scarf." Dawn Minder was second for "Cardinals."

Terry Elliott was first in Woodworking for "Paddle Boat." Jason Turner was



Paula Ring stands next to two of her pieces from this year's Art Show, with "Watermelon on the 4th of July" taking the top prize.

second for "Civil War Pen." Voting continues until May 9 at the Monroe County District Library in Woodsfield.

One award is yet to be determined, that being the People's Choice Award.

Resident requests rules

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Mayor Carol Hehr said she had already met with the Park Committee on the matter, saying that lifeguards were told that if someone was "acting up," that person would be "out for the season."

Also during the May 5 meeting, council took steps toward agreeing to a lease to take over the Brown Community Center.

Village Administrator Kevin Brooks prodded council to take action on the matter, saying it had been "put off" long enough.

Village Solicitor Ryan Regel had been working with the Brown Center Board of Directors on the lease agreement, and provided an update.

The lease would be for 15 years at \$1 per year. The village would be responsible for utilities at the facility, but not for real estate taxes.

The Brown Center name would need to remain in tact and it would also have to be used as a community center.

The village would also have an "out," allowing it to get out of the lease if it wasn't "working out."

Council approved a motion to move forward with the lease pending the finalization of the language of the lease document.

Council member Tom Kirkland mentioned a conversation he had with village residents in regard to the building the village tore down at the corner of South Main Street and East Church Street.

The lot is intended to be a small park, but has been a roped-off pit of sorts for months, as the village works through issues with the Ohio EPA. According to Brooks, "proper EPA protocol" was not following in the demolition process, which has led to the standstill. A temporary fence has been put back up at the site, as the village continues to work with the EPA to result the issue.

Delinquent Land Tax Sale

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April 25 for the public auction, which had to be relocated from its usual location to accommodate the large crowd.

The auction was the culmination of more than two years of preparation. Under Ohio law, tax foreclosure sales require counties to follow a rigorous legal process laid out in the Ohio Revised Code. The Monroe County Prosecutor's Office must conduct extensive due diligence before initiating foreclosure cases on delinquent properties, including providing legal notices, identifying all parties with interest in the parcels, and obtaining court orders authorizing the sale.

Monroe County Sheriff Derek Norman led the auction with the assistance of his staff, in coordination with Monroe County Prosecutor James Peters, Clerk of Courts Beth Ann Rose, and their respective staffs.

"This sale reflects a collective team effort across county offices to get these properties back into productive use," said Monroe County Treasurer Taylor Abbott. "I'm happy to see that these parcels will return to the hands of responsible tax-paying owners who will take care of them and contribute to our local tax base."

Of the \$937,416.07 raised through the sale, Monroe County was owed approximately \$76,500 in back taxes, penalties, and court fees. Under Ohio law, the county retains the portion necessary to cover those debts. Any remaining proceeds are held in trust for the previous property owners. If no rightful claims are made within three years of the sale, the surplus, in this case, potentially more than \$850,000, reverts to the county.

"It's important that we stand with the taxpayers who meet their obligations by holding those who don't accountable," said Treasurer Abbott. "Monroe County continues to maintain one of the lowest delinquency rates in the state because we take a proactive, fair approach. We offer payment plans and support for those who fall on hard times, there's no reason for anyone to fall too far behind when we have options to help them stay current."

Abbott extended his thanks to Prosecutor James Peters, Sheriff Derek Norman, Clerk of Courts Beth Ann Rose, and the staff from each office, including his own, for their efforts in bringing the successful sale to fruition.

Transformational change

From Pg. 1

25-county area, which includes Monroe County, during their regular meeting Monday, May 5.

That transformational change that Abbott, the president and CEO of OhioSE, alluded to could come through other avenues, such as improvements in health-care, childcare and housing, but, as he saw it, those are the pathways to change and attracting business and funding to communities.

Hamman sees the importance of focusing on things that lead to development, including infrastructure, saying he has seen projects slip through the county's fingers due to lacking what some see as necessities.

"We lost a project, a call center, as the old Shopko," Hamman said. "The CEO of the company was a little freaked out when she had no access to her cell service for a stretch (from Caldwell to Woodsfield)."

A focus on infrastructure at the former Conalco and Ormet sites along the Ohio River has helped the lost call center not be a repeated situation in Monroe County.

Hamman and Vetula praised the efforts of American Heavy Plates, which operates at the Hannibal Industrial Park. The company has made use of small business development programs through JobsOhio and OhioSE and has grown its workforce from 60 to more than 120 workers in a few years.

Hamman hopes Bitdeer, a data center set to locate at the Industrial Park, can be a similar jobs creator in the county. He expected construction to begin by the end of the year, with the data center opening by the end of 2026.

Commissioner Diane Burkhart expressed frustration that things take so long, but she was reminded by fellow commissioner Bill Bolon that even the construction phase of the project would bring jobs to the area, with Hamman adding that the data center would ultimately bring high-tech jobs, "jobs of the present and the future," as he put it.

Following their meeting with the commissioners, Hamman took Abbott and Vetula to tour the Powhatan No. 7 site and American Heavy Plates.

Also during the commissioners' regular meeting, Lisa Ward, executive director of the Mental Health and Recovery Board, visited with the commissioners to recognize May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

The commissioners read a proclamation for the occasion.

The commissioners also approved a motion to permit online sale of dog tags in the county by Monroe County Auditor Denise Stoneking's office.

Stoneking said her office had been looking for a way to move the service online and was presented an option to do so without a set up fee if it was done prior to the end of July.

The new online service will also house the county's dog tag database online.

County residents will still be able to purchase their dog tags in person or through the mail if they so desire.

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NOTICE

County Road 58

(KREIG ROAD)

County Road 58 (Krieg Road) will have a **DAYTIME CLOSURE, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday, starting May 19, lasting for approximately 3 weeks**, 0.4 miles west of the intersection with State Route 800, for a slip repair, weather permitting. Thank you for your patience.