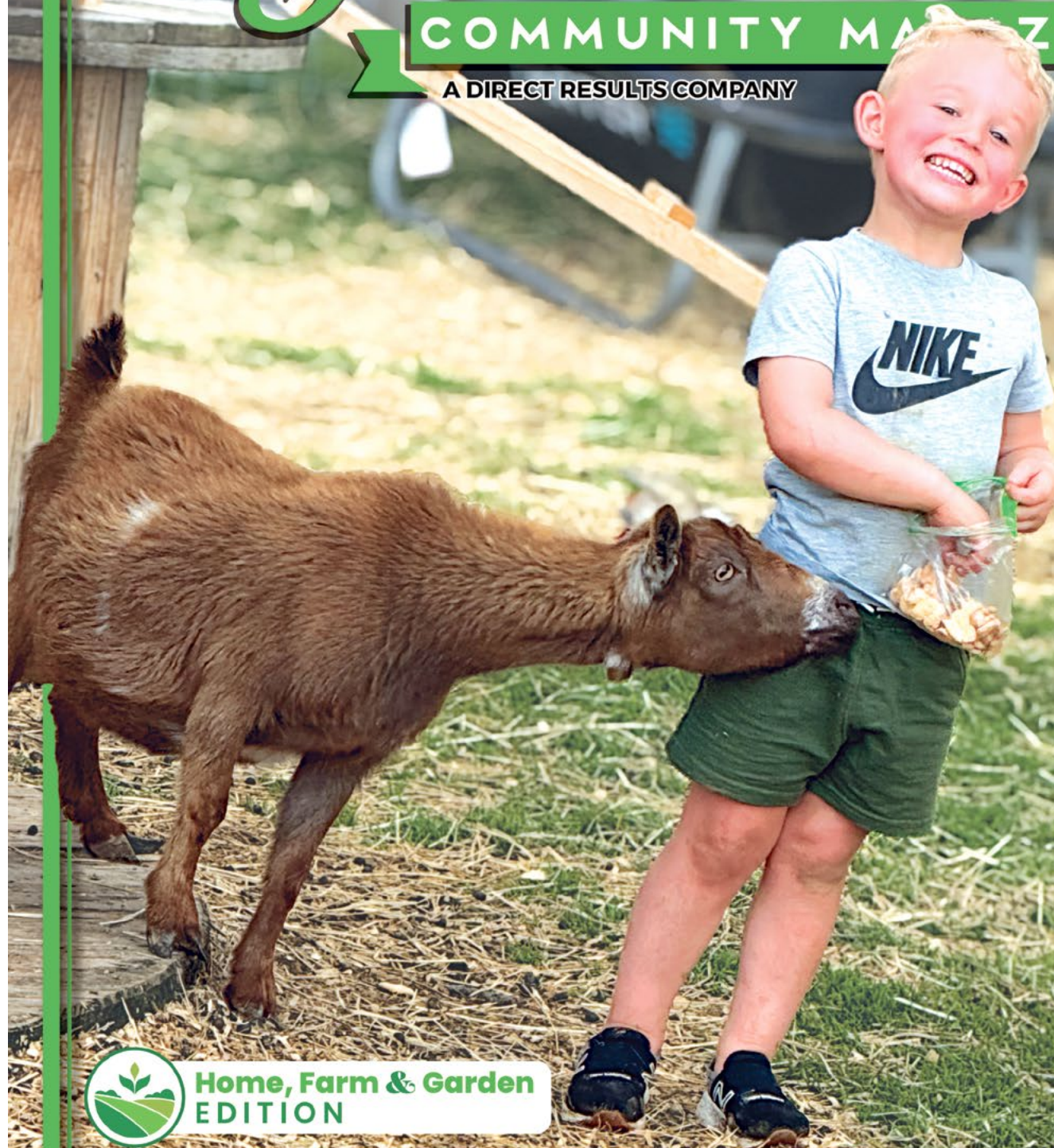


# Greene Scene

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

A DIRECT RESULTS COMPANY



Home, Farm & Garden  
EDITION

MAY 2026

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FRONT COVER PHOTO:  
Brycen Sholtis and his goat Dixie enjoy a snack as spring comes to Greene County.

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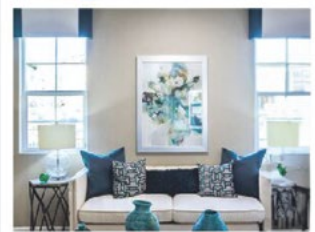
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# TOWNE SQUARE



## THE CASE FOR REASSESSMENT

As the adage goes, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results”. According to the Census Bureau, Greene County has continued to lose roughly 5% of our population every 10 years. To date, we have lost 33% of our population since 1950. When will this bleeding stop?

This decline is not a monolithic issue. If one issue was causing all these problems, we would simply fix it. Numerous issues are contributing to this decline. We lack public utilities - 75% of our county does not have public sewage; large amounts of land are being donated to the state for game lands; our public schools rankings are below average; our taxes are too high; we lack grant funding from the state; and our EMS and fire services are overburdened and strained.

The one thing we can all agree on is that increasing prices of goods and services are not slowing down. As the cost of insurance, building a park, healthcare, salaries, and cost of materials continue to increase, the taxing bodies (County, Schools and Municipalities) are forced to raise taxes to meet the needs of the community if new development is not coming in. We can discuss the needs for our elected officials to maintain a balanced budget in another article.

The largest revenue source for any taxing body is the ability to collect real estate taxes. If the population is declining and the cost of goods is increasing, it creates a scenario that is unsustainable for the long-term health of our community. If we do not figure out a way to increase the population, in turn, increasing the tax base of Greene County, we will continue down this spiral of raising taxes to a point where no one will be able to live here.

For example, Greene County has a millage rate of 0.0090035, the average Municipal millage rate is 0.00246 and the average School District millage rate is 0.022975. So, when you pay your taxes each year, 67% go to the school district, 26% go to the county, and only 7% go to the municipality. When someone says their taxes are too high, what they are really saying is that their *school* taxes are too high.

The good news is that not all is lost. We still have time to reverse this trend and start developing Greene County once more.

When you ask our County Commissioners about reassessment, you always get two responses: We are underassessed compared to other counties, and the cost is too great to reassess. The county does not currently have the millions of dollars it would take to do it. The former response is the primary obstacle that Greene County has when it comes to future growth.

The Commissioners are correct when they say we are under assessed. They are referring to what is known as the Common Level Ratio (CLR). The CLR in Greene County as compiled by the state is 38.23%. Which means if you own an existing home with a market value of \$100,000, your assessed value should be \$38,230.

In my research, I examined the last 50 homes in Greene County on Zillow to compare the market value of the home versus the assessed value of that home. I separated the homes into two sections: those built prior to 1990 and those built after. The research clearly shows that the average CLR of homes built prior to 1990 is 34.4%, and the average CLR of homes built after 1990 have a CLR of 49.4%.

The average Market Value from Zillow of homes built prior to 1990 is \$245,300, and the average Market Value of homes built after 1990 is \$409,315.

What does this mean to someone buying an existing home? Nothing. When a realtor

posts the home and advertises its sale, the assessed value is public knowledge and disclosed for the sale. The home buyer knows what their taxes will be prior to the purchase. For a new home builder, this information is not available until after final construction is completed and the home is assessed for the first time.

If we assume that these numbers are an accurate picture of the county, we can easily see in the example below that Greene County is discouraging development.

The figures below illustrate the difference between buying an existing home for \$300,000 compared to building a home for \$300,000 by applying the CLR to each home. An existing home built prior to 1990 sold at a cost of \$300,000, multiplied by the average CLR of 34.4%, will give you an assessed value of \$103,200. A new home built after 1990 for a cost of \$300,000, multiplied by the average CLR of 49.4%, will give you an assessed value of \$148,200. These assessed values can simply be applied to the average millage rates of the taxing bodies to determine the proposed real estate taxes one will pay.

Greene	County Taxes	Municipal Taxes	School Taxes	Total
Millage Rate	0.0090035	0.00246	0.022975	
Built Prior to 1990	\$932.41	\$253.87	\$2,371.02	\$3,557.30
New Home	\$1,334.32	\$364.57	\$3,404.90	\$5,103.79

The numbers don't lie; Greene County is taxing new development 43.5% more than an existing home of the same value.

I want to take some time to address the misconception most people have that a county-wide reassessment will automatically increase people's taxes. This is not true and is misleading at best. All taxing bodies are required to apply what is commonly known as the revenue neutral rule after a countywide reassessment. For example, if a taxing body collects \$1,000,000 prior to the reassessment, the millage rate needs to be lowered to a number that will only allow that taxing body to collect \$1,000,000 after the reassessment.

There is no doubt that some residents will see an increase in taxes if they have been under-assessed in the past. There is also no doubt that some residents will see a decrease in taxes if they have been over-assessed in the past. Undeniably true is that if you are looking to move to Greene County, you would have a much better idea of what your total tax burden would be prior to building.

Based on my research, Greene County has an estimated 17,245 housing units with an estimated market value of \$150,000. After a reassessment of current Market Values, the County millage rate could drop from 0.0090035 to 0.00343645, the Municipal millage rate

*Continued on next page*

The GreeneScene welcomes its readers to share their opinions on civic, economic, or cultural issues in Town Square Thoughts. All submissions must be respectful and constructive points of view aimed at improving our area. Please send Thoughts to [bret@directresults.us](mailto:bret@directresults.us) *We reserve the right to edit submissions for grammar, length and clarity.*

Continued from previous page

could drop from 0.00246 to 0.000938931, and the School District millage rate could drop from 0.022975 to 0.00876908. This would equal a 62% reduction in the current millage rate.

If we use the averages from my research numbers, we can see how the taxes would be affected based on a reassessment:

<b>Built Prior to 1990 (Average Home Market Value \$245,300)</b>				
	County Taxes	Municipal Taxes	School Taxes	Total
Current Millage	0.0090035	0.00246	0.022975	
Current Taxes	\$759.74	\$207.58	\$1,938.70	\$2,906.02
Reassessed Millage	0.00343645	0.000938931	0.00876908	
Reassessed Taxes	\$842.96	\$230.32	\$2,151.06	\$3,223.34

<b>Built After 1990 (Average Home Market Value \$409,315)</b>				
	County Taxes	Municipal Taxes	School Taxes	Total
Current Millage	0.0090035	0.00246	0.022975	
Current Taxes	\$1,820.52	\$497.42	\$4,645.58	\$6,963.52
Reassessed Millage	0.00343645	0.000938931	0.00876908	
Reassessed Taxes	\$1,406.59	\$384.32	\$3,589.32	\$5,370.23

It is not the intent of this article to call out any one person or even the county commissioners. Rather, the intention is to draw attention to the fact that the current assessment model implemented by the county is clearly burdening new home builders, and, in my opinion, clearly discouraging builders from developing Greene County.

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## APRIL PERSON, PLACE OR THING ANSWER

**Dave Goodwin (AKA The Governor)** is a 1993 graduate of West Greene and was a dominant low post player for the Pioneers basketball team. He was one of the main catalysts on back-to-back playoff teams in 1991 and 1992. He finished his career with 1,753 points, still the best in the program's history.

Goodwin made the all-section and all-district teams and was an **all-state selection** in his senior campaign.

Besides his accolades on the basketball court, Goodwin was also a key member on the 1992 football team that earned the school's first WPIAL playoff berth. That season the Pioneers made it all the way to the semifinals. He hauled in 30 receptions for 550 yards and nine touchdowns in the 1992 season.

After graduation, he went on to play basketball for coach Rudy Marisa at Waynesburg College. In 2017, he was inducted into the West Greene Sports Hall of Fame.

Goodwin has also had several coaching stints with the Pioneers' basketball programs. He also volunteers his time with little league basketball and softball in the West Greene area.

Today, he runs the family farm in Rutan. He and his wife Michelle have three daughters (Emily, Brianna, and Ali) and are expecting their first grandchild.



# PERSON PLACE OR THING

SCAN TO ENTER!



**Hint:**

*Near a Ten Mile bank where timbers lie,  
A merchant's yard hath stood through time's long flow;  
Since forty-nine of nineteen passed us by,  
Near eighty years its steadfast roots do grow.*

*There craftsmen, builders, dreamers daily tread,  
For wood and tool and ironwork they seek;  
From pane to paint, from frame to overhead,  
The means to raise the strong and shape the meek.*

*No soulless mart of vast and distant chain,  
But neighbor's hand that guides with knowing care;  
Where wisdom old outvalues fleeting gain,  
And friendly counsel lightens each repair.*

*Though names be veiled, its purpose still is clear:  
To build the homes that bind a community dear.*

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Re-Elect Camera Bartolotta in the May 19, 2026 Primary Election



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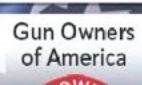




Since her election to the Pennsylvania Senate in 2014, Senator Bartolotta has built a reputation as a tireless advocate for economic growth, workforce development, energy independence, and justice reform. Representing communities across Washington, Greene, and Beaver Counties, she has championed legislation that strengthens Pennsylvania's economy, supports working families, and restores common sense to government. As the first Republican Senator elected since 1927, and the first woman elected to represent the 46th Senatorial District, her election ushered in a Red Wave across Southwestern Pennsylvania.



**U.S. Senator  
Dave McCormick**

*"Senator Bartolotta is a proven conservative leader who has consistently delivered for working families, championed Pennsylvania's energy industry and workers, and stood strong with law enforcement. Her steadfast support and partnership were critical to President Trump's and my victories in 2024, and I am proud to endorse her for re-election to the State Senate."*

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 <b>NFIB</b> National Federation of Independent Business		
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 Greene County Sheriff Marcus Simms	 Auditor General Tim DeFoor	 Treasurer Stacy Garrity

## Camera has also been endorsed by the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters and many local trade unions.

 EAS Regional Council of Carpenters	 Utility Workers System Local 102	 Boilermakers 154	 Operating Engineers Local 66	 Sheet Metal Workers Local 12
 United Mine Workers of America	 IBEW Local 459	 PA Laborers' District Council	 UA Local 27 Pittsburgh Plumbers	 Steamfitters Local 449
 IBEW Local 29	 Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local 9	 IBEW Local 5	 Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 354	

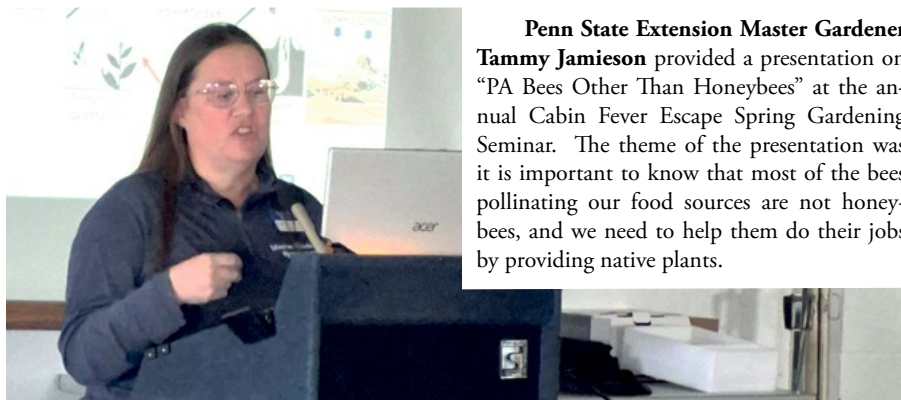
# Good NEWS

In Greene County



**Clay-Battelle Health Services Association (CBHSA)** has welcomed a new dentist, Dr. Michael Tomoroksa, who is now seeing patients at their Blacks ville location. His addition helps expand access to dental care in the community.

Dr. Tomoroksa is a first-generation American whose parents emigrated from Ukraine, and he's passionate about providing care in community-focused settings.



**Penn State Extension Master Gardener Tammy Jamieson** provided a presentation on "PA Bees Other Than Honeybees" at the annual Cabin Fever Escape Spring Gardening Seminar. The theme of the presentation was it is important to know that most of the bees pollinating our food sources are not honeybees, and we need to help them do their jobs by providing native plants.



**The Mt. Morris Community Center** held a seed starting class supported by the Penn State Extension Master Gardeners of Greene County. Participants chose various flower and vegetable seeds and learned about seed starting medium; depth of planting the seed; sunlight, water and caring for your seedlings.

## GYBA & Dunkard Youth Softball Presents: Annual Mid-Season Showdown Saturday, May 16

Starting at 9:00 AM with a Parade through Greensboro

Followed by the Opening Ceremonies and a Full Day of Baseball & Softball

Food: Full concession stand, The Prodigal Son Food Trailer, P.A. Poppers, Pay & Brynn's lemonade stand, Mapletown Methodist Church chicken roast dinners, and Morning Rush coffee truck, Vendors, 50/50, auction table, and more

## W. U. Announces 2026 Commencement Speakers

Waynesburg University will hold its annual Baccalaureate and Commencement exercises Sunday, May 3.

Gayle Manchin, Federal Co-Chair of the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), will address the Class of 2026 as the Commencement speaker, and Reverend Dr. Glen Bell, senior vice president of development of the Presbyterian Foundation, will serve as the Baccalaureate speaker.

Baccalaureate services will be held in Roberts Chapel at 11 a.m., and Commencement will be held on the front lawn of Miller Hall at 2 p.m.

**Gayle Manchin** was sworn in as the Appalachian Regional Commission's (ARC) thirteenth Federal Co-Chair in 2021, becoming the first ARC Federal Co-Chair from West Virginia. In this role, she works with ARC's 13-member governors, their state alternates, program managers and local development districts to strengthen economic growth throughout Appalachia, enhancing the region's national and global competitiveness.

An alumna of West Virginia University, Manchin previously worked as an educator in Marion County Schools and served on the faculty of Fairmont State University, directing the university's first Community Service Learning Program. She also led the AmeriCorps Promise Fellows in West Virginia.

Manchin previously served as West Virginia's First Lady, as a member and president of the State Board of Education and chair of the Board for Reconnecting McDowell, Inc., an AFT initiative serving rural West Virginia. She also served as cabinet secretary for the West Virginia Office of Education and the Arts, and as co-founder of the WV Public Education Collaborative, where she served as the Board Chair until her appointment to the ARC.

**Rev. Dr. Glen Bell** joined the Presbyterian Foundation in August 2020 as Senior Vice President of Development. Glen and his team are responsible for the development operations of the Foundation which consists of asset gathering from churches and individuals, stewardship education and fundraising consulting services to other Presbyterian organizations.

Before joining the Foundation, Rev. Dr. Bell dedicated 30 years as a pastor in a wide variety of Presbyterian Church (USA) congregations, serving churches in North Carolina, Indiana and Florida. His roles and duties have spanned preaching, teaching and pastoral care; leadership, management and operations; and stewardship and funds development.

He has written for Journal for Preachers, Presbyterian Outlook, and Family Ministry. He has been the opening preacher for the PC(USA)'s Stewardship Kaleidoscope conference and served on the boards of NEXT Church, Presbyterian Outlook and Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

Rev. Dr. Bell holds a Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity from Union Presbyterian Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

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**Clay-Battelle  
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 Association**

For more than 50 years, Clay-Battelle Health Services Association (CBHSA) has cared for families across northern West Virginia and southwest Pennsylvania. Located just 15 minutes from the heart of the county, CBHSA is focused on one clear mission: to provide quality medical, dental, and behavioral health care for individuals without regard to their ability to pay.

In Greene County, access matters. Many residents travel long distances for care or struggle to find providers who accept their insurance. CBHSA steps in to close that gap, providing health services as a trusted, affordable option for individuals and families of all ages.

**CBHSA offers full-spectrum services under one roof, including:**

**Primary Care:** Routine checkups, chronic condition management, sick visits, and preventive screenings.

**Behavioral Health:** Counseling and mental health support.

**Dental Services:** Exams, cleanings, fillings, crowns, and education focused on prevention.

**Pharmacy:** Convenient, onsite prescription services make it easy to leave with medications in hand after an appointment.

CBHSA's integrated approach saves time and reduces stress. It also improves health outcomes. When providers work together, patients receive more coordinated, consistent care.

As an FQHC, CBHSA also strives to eliminate barriers to care. It offers a sliding fee scale for those who qualify and welcomes patients with Medicaid, Medicare, private insurance, or no insurance at all. Additionally, same-day appointments and extended hours help families fit healthcare into busy schedules.

But services alone do not define CBHSA. Our people do. The team at CBHSA lives and works in the same communities they serve. They understand the community. They know their patients by name. They take time to listen and understand.

That local connection strengthens trust, which leads to better health. When patients feel respected and heard, they are more likely to seek care early and stay engaged in their treatment.

For Greene County residents looking for a reliable healthcare partner, CBHSA stands ready to help. Call today to schedule your appointment at (304) 432.8211 or visit [cbhealthwv.org](http://cbhealthwv.org) to learn more.



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## Cool at School:



Mapletown's Envirothon students had an incredible hands-on learning experience at Ohiopyle. They successfully released trout fry into Meadow Run, a cold-water habitat that provides the perfect conditions for these fish to thrive.

With guidance from the Ohiopyle staff, students also explored real-world environmental science by assessing the water quality of Cucumber Run. They collected and identified macroinvertebrates and measured the stream's flow rate—key indicators of ecosystem health.

## Cool at School:

### ACHTUNG SCHULER

Southeastern Greene School District Board member **Janet Pennington** was selected from a group of Pennsylvania educational leaders for an international study group. The PSBA Institute selected a 12-member cohort to focus on the German education system. During the week-long trip to three cities, the group met with government leaders, visited elementary and secondary schools, a university, business partners, and the Bayer facility. In addition, the group met with the US Consul General to Düsseldorf, Preeti Shah.



## Cool at School:

### APRIL SHOWERS BRING MORE THAN MAY FLOWERS FOR CARMICHAELS AREA

By Emma Bates

April showers are watering the May flowers in all their forms again at Carmichaels this spring. The school is alive and blossoming with new educational opportunities and reviving old traditions, too. As the days grow longer and warmer, students take to the great outdoors. Lunch periods, electives, and independent studies find students soaking up the sun in the high school library courtyard, chalk full of picnic tables, life-sized games, and budding trees to lift the spirits and chase away the cobwebs during study time.

All the while, the **Envirothon team** is shaping up for another exciting year of scientific discovery and competition with their annual tree plant, this time at a local landowner's home in Greensboro as part of the GRACE program through the Greene County Conservation District DCNR Bureau of Forestry. These experts will guide students in applied methods for tree identification and land management practices that go beyond simple book knowledge.

The Envirothon team is also planning an on-campus field experience through the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy with stations such as Forest Riparian Zone maintenance, macroinvertebrate collection, and stream electrofishing to connect with the aquatic biodiversity within the district's own branch of Muddy Creek. These waters, mere steps from the classroom door, are teaming with life as far as the eye can—or can't see.

At the elementary school, reading seeds were planted as young students took on a **"Read Across America" March Madness** book bracket. Each week, first graders gathered to enjoy two competing stories read by high school seniors from the National Honor Society. After both stories were read for the week, each student was encouraged to vote for his or her favorite book.

The winners of each week faced off in another round where fan favorites were lovingly repeated until the final book was decided. While students undoubtedly enjoyed the jungle sounds and engaging voices of other tales, it was the humorous illustrations and understated language of David Shannon's "No David" that took home the gold in this year's elementary book bracket.

Middle schoolers are also getting out of their comfort zones and watering their public speaking skills with their upcoming play at the conclusion of their sixth grade **Introduction to Drama** elective. The class reads only plays during this nine-week literature and performance course, which often lack context due to such works seldom being performed live. The students will vote on their favorite play and perform it in the auditorium for other middle schoolers and parents of students, allowing these adolescents to embrace the stage and their own voices, perhaps for the first time.

The seeds of learning being watered in Carmichaels are the result of compassionate and dedicated faculty members, whom the students wish to personally thank and recognize during **Teacher's Appreciation Week** (May 4-8). This week (and all the rest), students hope their teachers soak up a little of the encouragement and joy that have been cultivated all along. Here's to the educators, and here's to spring, 2026!



Tyler Birr, Lindsay Kikta, and Taylor Giles demonstrate the outdoor scrabble board at the Paci Madich Commons outside Carmichaels High School's Library/Media Center.

## Cool at School:

### A SWAMP-TASTIC SHOW: MCGUFFEY HIGH SCHOOL STAGES SHREK THE MUSICAL

By Lindsay Six

Last month, the stage at McGuffey High School was transformed into a vibrant swamp for its production of *Shrek the Musical*. Filled with humor and high-energy performances, the show delighted audiences and showcased the incredible talent of the school's students.

Based on the beloved animated film, *Shrek the Musical* tells the story of Shrek, a grumpy but lovable ogre who enjoys his quiet life in a swamp until it's invaded by a group of banished fairytale creatures. Determined to reclaim his home, Shrek sets off on a journey with a talkative donkey to rescue Princess Fiona from her desolate tower. Along the way, Shrek learns about friendship, acceptance, and what truly makes us special.

The production featured performances from Logan Crowe (Junior) as Shrek, who brought both humor and heart to the role, and Moshe Dale (Junior) as Donkey, whose comedic timing kept the audience laughing. Abigail Tichnel (Freshman) shined as Princess Fiona, delivering a dynamic portrayal of the character who was kept guarded by a fire-breathing Dragon (Eliza Keaveney-Lorince, Junior) who



just wanted a little love. Meanwhile, Tein Barton (Sophomore) as Lord Farquaad added a memorable, hilarious villainous flair.

Behind the scenes, the show was made possible by the hard work of Music Director/Producer Lindsay Six, Acting Director John Franz, Choreographer Jady Matson, and Artistic Director Melissa Voytek, along with a dedicated crew of students and

volunteers. The colorful costumes, courtesy of Opening Night Costumes in Washington, helped to bring the story to life.

Overall, *Shrek the Musical* was a resounding success and a testament to the creativity and dedication of everyone involved. Congratulations to the cast, crew, and staff for an unforgettable show.

## Cool at School:

### RAIDERS ATTEND WU'S ENTREPRENEURS FOR TOMORROW WORKSHOP



Students from Mrs. Keller's engineering design program and students from Mrs. Tretinik's gifted program had the opportunity to attend the "Entrepreneurs for Tomorrow" workshop at Wayne State University on March 27th.

Graduate student Zach Reed shared with students the skills needed to develop and present new products and innovations. The students then competed in a design challenge and presented their solution to a panel of judges. Students who participated were Tyler Camilli, Hayden Housel, Devyn Leighton, Mason Loughner, Chase McLe, Ian Marshall, Will Maxwell, Aubrey Morris, Preston Orosz, Will Pulkownik, Joshua Stickles, Karmyn Szweczyk, Isaac Whipkey, and Caleb Wise.

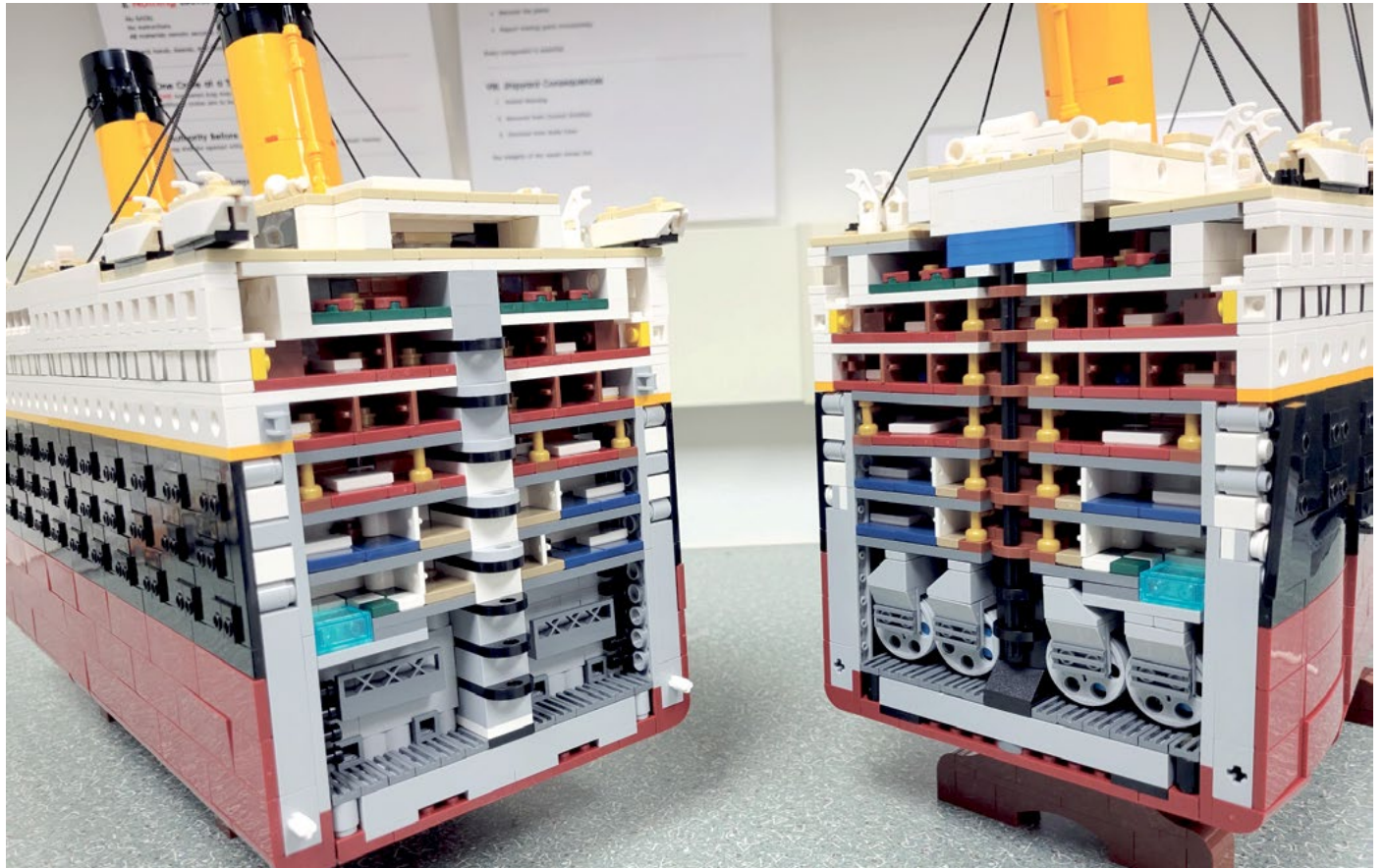
## Cool at School:

### TITANIC SUCCESS AT JEFF-MORGAN

There is an exciting progress update from the Jefferson-Morgan GATE & High School Engineering Team. The students are making incredible progress on the LEGO build of the RMS Titanic. They are now about two-thirds complete.

This was a major milestone in a project that required teamwork, patience, and true engineering problem-solving. In a meaningful historical connection, this stage aligns with the 114th anniversary of the Sinking of the RMS Titanic, giving students a powerful connection to the real story behind the engineering.

*Special thanks to Pam and Kent Marisa for donating the Titanic Lego set.*



## Cool at School:

### PIONEERS' GREENHOUSE IN FULL BLOOM

By Aubrey Lesnett

The West Greene FFA greenhouse continues to serve as both a learning space for students and a valuable resource for the local community. More than just a place to grow plants, the greenhouse gives students hands-on experience in agriculture, business, and responsibility—skills that extend far beyond the classroom.

**For members of the West Greene FFA chapter, the greenhouse plays a central role in their education.** Students are directly involved in the day-to-day operations, learning how to care for plants from seed to sale. This includes watering, transplanting, monitoring growth, and troubleshooting issues that arise along the way.

In addition to plant care, students also gain experience in running a small business. From organizing inventory to assisting customers, the greenhouse provides a real-world environment where they can develop practical skills that will benefit them in future careers. “The greenhouse is a crucial part of our chapter,” said current chapter president Eryka Hackney. “Our students learn firsthand how to care for plants and properly run a business like the greenhouse.”

This season, the greenhouse is filled with a variety of plants that reflect both tradition and new ideas. Students are currently growing tomatoes and ferns, two popular choices that appeal to many local gardeners. Alongside these staples, the chapter is also offering hanging baskets, which have become a highlight of this year's selection. According

to Hackney, these baskets feature more variety than in previous years, giving customers more options to choose from when decorating their homes and outdoor spaces.

**The greenhouse is not only important for students—it also holds significance for the surrounding community.** Each year, local residents visit to purchase plants, supporting the program while also investing in their own gardens. This connection creates a sense of mutual benefit: students gain valuable experience, and community members receive quality plants grown locally. It also strengthens ties between the school and the community, making the greenhouse a shared point of pride.

Looking ahead, the West Greene FFA chapter has clear goals for the future of the greenhouse. One of the main objectives is to continue expanding the variety of plants available. By introducing new options and building on what has worked well in the past, the program hopes to attract even more customers and provide students with an even broader learning experience.

Since the growing and planting seasons are currently at peak, local residents can play an important role in the continued success of the program by shopping and spreading the word about what the students are doing. The West Greene FFA Greenhouse was built with a specific purpose and serves as a strong example of education and community coming together.



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# A SALUTE TO FARMERS

By Lisa Lewis

Penn State Extension Master Gardener of Greene County

When I first moved to Eastern Kansas in 1979, I was at once struck by the richness of the soil and the vastness of the sky. Thunderheads forming and rolling in from the southwest, casting a moving line of shadows and rain over the black and green fields of winter wheat, was an impressive sight. I also loved seeing the roadside sign on my way to work depicting a bag of groceries and reading “one Kansas farmer feeds 155 people + you”.

We all owe a deep, daily vote of thanks to our farmers who feed us. We need to do what we can to make sure that our farmland continues to exist and stays fertile and healthy and that young people who want to choose farming have a path to making that dream a reality. After all, over half of all Pennsylvania farmers are age 55 or older. In the 15-year period from 1982 to 1987 Pennsylvania lost 1.14 million acres or 1,800 square miles of fields and natural land to development.

**“Saving farmland for producing food, rather than losing it to warehouses and sprawl is an investment we can’t afford not to make,” according to Pennsylvania Agricultural Secretary Russell Reading.**

In Pennsylvania, farmers have three avenues to preserve their farmland. First, with the help of one of 68 different private, charitable land trusts ([https://conservationtools.org/library\\_items/1434](https://conservationtools.org/library_items/1434)). Second, through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program ([https://conservationtools.org/library\\_items/1248](https://conservationtools.org/library_items/1248)). Third, through a combination of these private and public options.

**Pennsylvania leads the nation in preserved farmland.** It has preserved 6,482 farms amounting to 646,754 acres in 58 counties since voters overwhelmingly voted for the Farmland Preservation Program in 1988. Last December Governor Shapiro announced the plan to purchase the development rights to 2,842 acres on 31 farms in 13 counties to preserve them for farmland and protect them from future residential or commercial use.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has the Bureau of Farmland Preservation, which administers and distributes the program funds to the counties. A farmer’s first step in becoming enrolled in this government program is enrolling in the Agricultural Security Areas, which protects the farm against ordinances and nuisance lawsuits that would interfere with nor-



mal farming activities.

Then, the landowner can file an application to be included in the Farmland Preservation Program. If the application meets with approval and the farmer accepts, the program pays the farmer the difference between “fair market value” and the “agricultural value” in exchange for a permanent deed restriction preventing the use of the property for any use that negatively impacts its agricultural viability. The property owner keeps the title, can sell the property or pass it to heirs while still maintaining its agricultural use.

**From milk to apples to mushrooms Pennsylvania is a primary producer of food for the state and the nation.** Do what you can to show thanks to our farmers by frequenting the local farmers market, buying locally produced products when available in the grocery store, and in any way you can.

## FARMERS STRUGGLE AS FERTILIZER SUPPLIES RUN LOW

By T.R. Mahle

Local farmers have been having trouble obtaining certain types of Fertilizer. **Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium** have become harder to obtain recently. The global fertilizer shortage has had a profound effect on local farmers, reshaping how they manage crops, finances, and long-term sustainability.

This shortage emerged from a combination of disruptions, including supply chain issues and geopolitical tensions such as the Russia-Ukraine war and the conflict in Iran. Because Russia, Iran, and Ukraine play critical roles in the global supply, reduced exports led to sharp price increases and limited availability worldwide.

The U.S. has lower direct dependence on Middle Eastern imports than other nations. However, the 97% import reliance on potassium and significant nitrogen/phosphate imports make the U.S. market extremely sensitive to the resulting price spikes.

The strait of Hormuz handles 220,000 tons of nitrogen fertilizer daily, and some producers import roughly 3.8 million metric tons of Sulphur annually from the Persian Gulf to produce phosphate.

For local farmers, the most immediate impact has been economic. Fertilizer is a key input for maximizing crop and hay yields, and rising costs have significantly increased production expenses. Many small and mid-sized farmers operate on thin profit margins, so even modest price hikes can be destabilizing.

**According to Kelly Morris of Waynesburg Milling, “Our supplier is offering blends with 10% nitrogen to try to spread out their supply as much as possible. When our stock of 19-19-19 is gone, we may not be able to get more.**

**Unfortunately, that’s our most popular item. But even the material with lower percentages of nitrogen have spiked in price this year”.**

With fertilizer prices doubling or even tripling in some areas, farmers have had to make difficult decisions like either absorbing the higher costs or reducing usage. In many cases, they simply cannot afford to use as much fertilizer as before.

Reduced fertilizer application directly affects crop yields, and the shortage has forced farmers to adapt their practices. Some have turned to alternative methods, such as organic fertilizers, composting, or crop rotation, to maintain soil fertility.

While these approaches can be beneficial in the long term, they often require more labor, time, and knowledge. Not all farmers have the resources or training to implement such changes effectively.

**Morris offered the following advice, “We rent a soil probe so people can send their samples to Penn State for analysis. The Extension agronomy expert is super helpful in interpreting results and making suggestions. Many times people don’t actually need 19-19-19 levels.”**

The volatility in fertilizer supply and pricing has made it harder for farmers to plan planting seasons or invest in future production. This uncertainty can discourage expansion and innovation, potentially slowing agricultural growth in the region.

Organizations like the Food and Agriculture Organization have warned that prolonged fertilizer shortages could have lasting global consequences, particularly for small farmers. Without adequate support, these farmers risk falling into cycles of debt and reduced productivity.

While some are finding innovative ways to cope, the

broader impacts highlight the vulnerability of agricultural systems to global disruptions and the need for more resilient and sustainable farming practices.

Fertilizer production, especially nitrogen, depends heavily on energy (like natural gas). When gas prices rise, fertilizer production gets more expensive. Unfortunately, natural gas prices are expected to stay elevated into 2026 resulting in higher cost even when there is an ample supply.

Europe has also reduced production due to high energy costs. Finally, trade policies and tariffs affect imports (e.g., potash from Canada), resulting in higher prices here at home.

The effects of the shortage are already visible. Farmers are switching to crops that need less fertilizer or reducing fertilizer use, which results in lower crop yields.

Currently, there is still at least a restricted supply of fertilizer; however, an uncertain future supply chain could be even more devastating for the industry.



# FROM FAMILY FIELDS TO FACTORY FARMS AND BACK AGAIN: THE TRANSFORMATION OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

By Bret Moore

Historically, southwestern Pennsylvania was never as agriculturally dominant as the southeastern or central parts of the state. Its hilly terrain, poorer soils, and transportation challenges limited large-scale farming even in earlier periods. My grandfather always told me, “They farm in the Midwest. Around here, we just plow up a holler here and there.”

However, a century ago, Pennsylvania in general was dominated by small, family-owned farms. Like the rest of the country, the number of farms peaked in the early 20th century and has steadily declined ever since. **Nationally, farm numbers fell from nearly 7 million in the 1930s to about 1.88 million today**, as mechanization and productivity increased. Pennsylvania has followed this same pattern.

The transformation accelerated after World War II, when technology improved dramatically. Tractors replaced horses, and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides boosted yields. These advances increased productivity but also required significant capital investment, making it harder for smaller farms to compete.

Government policy also played a critical role. Subsidies and price supports, designed to stabilize the agricultural economy, disproportionately benefited larger operations that produced commodity crops like corn, soybeans, and wheat. As a result, many small farmers found themselves squeezed by thin profit margins and volatile markets.

By the late 20th century, Agribusiness corporations expanded their reach, integrating multiple stages of production, processing and distribution. Large companies began shaping supply chains on a global scale.

Environmental concerns further complicated the picture. Industrial farming practices, including monocropping and heavy use of chemical inputs, have been linked to soil degradation, water pollution, and loss of Biodiversity. Critics argue that the emphasis on efficiency and profit has come at the expense of long-term sustainability.

No doubt, the consequences of this shift are complex and contested. **On one hand, Big Ag has made food more abundant and affordable.** American consumers spend a smaller percentage of their income on food than ever before, thanks in part to the efficiencies of large-scale production. Advances in technology and logistics have also ensured a consistent supply of food across vast distances.

**On the other hand, the decline of small family farms has had profound social and environmental impacts.** Rural communities have been hollowed out as fewer farmers are needed to work larger tracts of land. Local businesses, from equipment suppliers to grocery stores, often struggle or disappear. Unfortunately, the cultural identity



tied to family farming may also be fading.

According to recent data from the USDA Statistics Service, Pennsylvania had about 48,800 farms in 2024, dropping slightly to 48,400 farms in 2026. While this short-term decline may appear modest, it reflects a much longer downward trajectory that stretches back generations.

One of the most striking examples of this decline is in the dairy sector, a cornerstone of Pennsylvania agriculture. In 2025 alone, the state lost hundreds of dairy farms. Overall, Pennsylvania experienced an 11.7% drop in dairy farms in a single year, a rate significantly higher than the national average. Despite these losses, total milk production has remained relatively stable or even increased, reflecting consolidation into larger operations.

**Farmers in our corner of the state face several region-specific pressures:**

1. **The region's proximity to the Pittsburgh metro area means farmland is often sold for housing, energy development (like natural gas), or commercial use rather than passed on to new farmers.**

*I remember when we played South Fayette when I was in high school. The area was very rural and had a tiny Class A school. Today, it is a wealthy 5A school district supported by an incredibly large suburban housing boom.*

2. Compared to other regions, **farms in southwestern Pennsylvania tend to be smaller and less suited to large-scale commodity production.** Thin profit margins make it harder to compete in today's agricultural economy.

3. **Many farmers rely on outside jobs to supplement income**, and when farming becomes unsustainable, it is often abandoned entirely.

4. Southwestern Pennsylvania has an aging rural population, and farming is no exception. **Many farm operators are nearing retirement age**, and fewer young people are choosing to take over.

Yet the story is not entirely one of loss. In recent years, there has been renewed interest in local food systems, organic farming, and sustainable practices. Farmers markets, community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, and small-scale regenerative farms are gaining traction, offering alternatives to the dominant industrial model.

Ultimately, the decline in farm numbers in Pennsylvania is not simply a story of loss, but of transformation. The challenge for the future will be balancing efficiency and productivity with the preservation of rural communities and their agricultural heritage.

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## Intentional Walks

By Bret Moore

**WHEN ESPN TREATS THE WWE LIKE SPORT,  
IT'S JUST ONE MORE STEP TO SOCIETAL SURREALISM**

*Bret Moore is the Director of Recreation for Greene County. He taught English and coached multiple sports at McGuffey High School for thirty years. He is also the author of **Rough and Ungentlemanly Tactics**, a two-volume history of sports in Greene County, available at Direct Results and McCracken Pharmacy.*



For those who are unaware, “Kayfabe” is a professional wrestling term for the practice of maintaining the illusion that staged storylines, feuds, and matches are genuine. It involves performers remaining in character even outside the ring to protect the “secrets of the industry”

Although I have not been a fan of professional wrestling since I played for the Bonar Bears and Bruno Sammartino was THE MAN, I know many adults who still enjoy the show and share it with their kids and grandkids. This column is by no means a denigration of that entertainment genre.

There was a time when professional wrestling lived in its own strange, electric universe—part sport, part theater, and wholly unapologetic about the blurred line between the two. That ambiguity was the point. Fans of WWE didn't tune in for box scores or injury reports. They tuned in for spectacle, storytelling, and the long-running illusions.

However, last September, ESPN and the WWE reached a five-year agreement for the sports giant to carry wrestling for the incredible sum of 1.6 BILLION dollars.

The wrestling illusion is being repackaged, even flattened since **ESPN has begun covering the WWE as though it were a conventional sport**. Match previews, rankings-style analysis, and “breaking news” updates about scripted outcomes now sit alongside coverage of the NFL and NBA. The presentation suggests parity. But the effect is something closer to confusion.

Professional wrestling has always thrived on its unique identity. Unlike traditional sports, where uncertainty is rooted in competition, wrestling's drama is crafted. The outcomes are predetermined, the rivalries written, and the characters carefully constructed.

That inherently makes it different. Treating it like a box-score-driven enterprise misunderstands its appeal. You wouldn't review a Broadway play like a playoff game, and yet ESPN often frames WWE events as if they're decided by athletic merit.

**This shift matters because presentation shapes perception.** When a major outlet like ESPN adopts the language of sport by calling a storyline development a “result” or analyzing a championship run as if it were

earned through competitive dominance, it erodes the audience's understanding of what wrestling actually is.

Unfortunately, we live in a world where many, many people already have a tenuous grasp on facts and reality. Their inability to separate the medium from the message and cognitively analyze presented material risks a further decent into a Kafkaesque existence.

Of course, the majority of wrestling fans are in on the joke. They embrace its theatricality and lean into character arcs and narrative stakes. But ESPN's approach strips away that richness for fans, reducing complex storylines to headline-friendly summaries. A long buildup is condensed into a recap that reads like a game log. For fans, the magic of absurd, over-the-top, human drama is harder to find in that format.

The partnership makes business sense on the surface. The WWE gains mainstream “legitimacy”. ESPN gains access to a massive, loyal audience. In an era where media companies are scrambling for content, the lines between entertainment and sports are increasingly porous. But just because something can be framed as sport doesn't mean it should be.

In fact, early results suggest the partnership has not lived up to the hype. Neither side has released viewership figures and rumors abound that ESPN is having buyer's remorse. Of course, each side is blaming bad pricing and programming decisions on the other. I would suggest that ESPN simply misunderstood their core audience. After all, I like ketchup, and I like ice cream. They just don't belong together.

The irony is that wrestling has spent decades fighting for recognition as performance art, not athletic competition. By forcing it into the mold of traditional sports coverage, ESPN risks undoing that progress. It's not that wrestling isn't athletic. It absolutely is. But its core is narrative, not competitive.

For those who love it, the beauty of professional wrestling has always been its refusal to fit neatly into a single category. It's a soap opera with suplexes, a morality play in spandex. Treating it like a sport doesn't elevate it. It diminishes what made it special for fans in the first place, while also undermining the legitimacy of competitive athletic achievements.



**Madison Blair** is the daughter of Matthew and Heidi Blair. She is a sophomore and maintains a 4.0 in the classroom. She is a varsity letterwinner in soccer, track & field, and for the school's inaugural Unified Bocce team.

She is also a Level 9 gymnast at West Virginia Gymnastics Training Center. **Maddie was the 2025 WV state champion in floor** and a two-time regional qualifier, where she medaled in vault in 2025.

During her freshman year, she placed 7th in pole vault at the WPIAL championship and was selected as the WCHS Female Freshman MVP for track & field. Maddie is a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Waynesburg and plans to attend a university "down south" to major in physical therapy.



**Braelynn Bayles** is the daughter of Darin and Kelly Bayles of Clarksville. She is a returning sophomore letterman for the Rockets. She also plays travel ball for the Lady Knights.

In school, she is a member of the yearbook staff and carries a highest honors GPA. Braelynn also volunteers at the Jefferson Senior Center. She enjoys working out and hunting. Her future plans include attending college to enter the medical field.

*A special Thank You to CREK Photography for providing some great photos.*



**Nate Ricciuti** is the son of Jeremy and Meghan Ricciuti of Waynesburg. He is a dedicated multi-sport athlete who represents the Raiders with pride. He competes as a member of the track and field team, contributes as a kicker for the varsity football team, and is also an important part of varsity soccer and the unified bocce program.

Nate's commitment, versatility, and strong work ethic make him a valuable asset in all four sports. As a freshman, Nate is focused on maintaining his commitment to athletics while continuing to grow, excel, and build a strong foundation for his future both on and off the field.



**Brayden Ellsworth** is the son of Bruce Ellsworth and Brean & Brian Fuller of Rices Landing.

He is a multi-year letterman for the Rockets and an All-County selection in baseball, basketball and golf. In school, he is a member of the Science Club, Environment, and the National Honor Society. He enjoys fishing and plans to major in nursing.



**Coltin Halbert** is the son of Kevin and Christina Halbert of Dilliner. A dedicated student-athlete, he has played football and baseball for four years in addition to a year of basketball. He also attends the welding program at the Career and Technical Center and is currently participating in their CDL program, with plans to pursue a career as a commercial driver after graduation. In his spare time, he enjoys hunting and fishing.



**Reagan Ostrich** is the daughter of Dannelle and Michael Howard of Holbrook. She is a sophomore and participates in volleyball, cheerleading, and track & field. Reagan is a member of the school's FFA Chapter, and she enjoys raising dachshunds.



**Sophia Vanata** is a freshman starter for the volleyball and softball teams. In school, she maintains a 4.6 GPA. Sophia also enjoys cheerleading and playing travel volleyball for Rise in Morgantown. She is the daughter of John and Brianna Vanata of Greensboro.



**Gavin Roberts** is the son of Greg and Allison Roberts of Nineveh. He is a freshman and participates in varsity football and baseball. Gavin is a member of the Pioneers' FFA program and ski club. He enjoys riding dirt bikes, along with hunting and fishing in the outdoors.

*Correction!*

West Greene's **Colin Whyte** placed third at the Class AA PIAA State Wrestling Championships. (In the April edition, he was incorrectly listed as the fourth-place finisher)

Colin will continue his career at Division 1 Kent State University next year.

## SPORTS SHORTS

Lincoln Simpson won the 2026 PJW Youth Wrestling 8U State Championship for Waynesburg.

West Greene's Darren Knight threw a NO HITTER over 5 innings with 12 strikeouts and 0 walks against Mapletown.



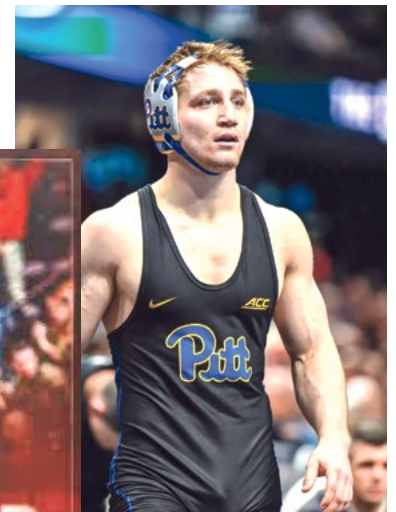
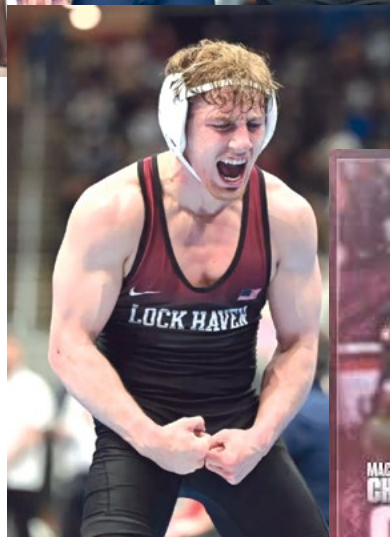
Former WCHS Raider standout, Carl Vollmer just won his 300th WPIAL game as the baseball coach of the Plum High School Mustangs.



Raider alumni Drew Layton (Slippery Rock) and Emily Mahle (PennWest-California) both qualified for the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference track meet.



Four former Waynesburg Central wrestlers qualified for the NCAA Division I National Championships. Rocco Welsh (Penn State, All-American), Wyatt Henson (Lock Haven, All-American), Mac Church (Virginia Tech), and Luca Augustine (Pitt).



Jefferson-Morgan's Deakyn DeHoet broke both the 100m and 200m records at the Chartiers Houston Invitational. Deakyn is running for Beth-Center as part of the schools' co-op agreement.



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# 42 SEASONS

By Dave Bates



In major league baseball, the number 42 bears great significance. Forty-two was the number of the legendary Jackie Robinson, famous for a hall of fame career and notable moments like stealing home against the New York Yankees in the 1955 World Series. The number has been retired across major league baseball teams throughout the league to pay homage to a legend.

In Greene County baseball history, 42 is the number of seasons that Jefferson-Morgan Head Coach, John Curtis, has spent at the helm of the Rocket baseball program. Forty-two years, now that's a career! In a day and age where the tenure of a high school baseball coach is probably closer to five years, Curtis has done what few have ever done. And that is to endure. To outlast. To adapt and change with the times.

Along the way he has accomplished more than most and experienced a prolific ride along the way. Curtis has enjoyed more seasons than nearly all of his compatriots in the WPIAL, leaving him as one of the deans of high school baseball as he makes his exit at the end of this season.

Truth be told, he has probably coached more seasons than all the active county high school coaches combined. John has enjoyed coaching through six decades of baseball in one capacity or another; five decades at Jefferson-Morgan. At the beginning of this season, he is a 400 plus game winner (411 to be exact) at J-M with a lifetime winning percentage of .587.

That total will be added to as well, this season. Curtis is approaching the career win mark of Peters Township great and fellow Greene County native, Joe Maize, who sits atop the heap at 422 wins over 35 seasons.

Curtis is likely the all-time wins leader in Greene County baseball lore, for sure in recent times. The Rocket skipper has coached over 600 players in his tenure and assisted well over two dozen players in reaching the college ranks.

*John has also coached one professional pitcher in Adam Dukate, who played in Australia during the mid-2000's. Dukate had this to say about Curtis' impact on him as a little league player, a high school player, an assistant coach on the JM staff and most recently as the head baseball coach at LaRoche College. "Most of all, Curty held us accountable. He built strong relationships with his players. He could correct you without burying you when you made a mistake, and he was always willing to spend the extra time with you as one of his players. He threw a lot of extra batting practice to me as a Dry Tavern Red!"*

In addition, Curtis has ridden tens of thousands of miles on school buses (and the rare, much-appreciated charter coach,) raked miles of turf, and hit approximately a billion fungoes in his baseball life, earning approximately \$126,000.00 before taxes in his career. That adds up to about .32 cents per hour for time served.

\*The fungoe total will only increase as he expects to winter in Florida following his retirement from the game. His grandkids will require more of the same old form.

What keeps a guy in the game for 42 seasons? Curtis has no idea. "I'd have never believed I'd last 42 seasons", offers Curtis. "Certainly, it was never about the money. We were called to the district office and told that we couldn't be paid if we didn't sign our contracts. We thought, they're paying us to coach? We'd have done it for free!"

At 74, Curtis still enjoys the long days and the long bus rides - in essence, the grind. "It gets harder and harder with each season," remarks Curtis. While he still enjoys teaching the game, teaching life is what he seems to enjoy most. And that is what his former players recall most fondly.

*Former J.M. shortstop Kirt Virgin shared this about his time as a player on Curtis' squads. "Treat your players well. John cared about us. I enjoyed my relationship with him as a friend as well as a coach. I loved playing for Curtis. I have some great relationships with my former players, and I attribute them to my relationship with John as my coach."*

Chuck Coles, who may have hit the longest tape measure shot in the history of JM baseball according to Curtis during his tenure as head coach had this to say about his former mentor. "Coach made me want to do my best. I always wanted to please him, and he made me a better man for that. Disappointing Coach was never an option."

Curtis allowed his players to be individuals and gave them the freedom to be themselves. He was a true player's coach. "I've always loved preparing for an opponent," says Curtis. "The X's



and O's of the game have been great, but it's the personal relationships that mean the most to me. That's what I'll miss most about the game."

Former Carmichaels Mikes baseball head coach and J.M. grad Dave Bates had this to say about his best friend and high school coach. "The first words I remember John Curtis ever speaking to me were in my sophomore year on the breezeway of the high school overpass.

*"It was early January on a bitterly cold day, well in advance of baseball season. I said hello to coach as we passed in the halls and he responded, 'Batsey; better get that first baseman's mit oiled up, Chuckie Coles graduated.' I didn't realize that he even knew who I was, but I figured if Coach Curtis knew me, then I must be pretty special. For a kid that had just lost his dad a short time before, those were important words. But that's how he makes everybody feel. That's the legacy he'll leave behind."*

**A baseball gathering is being planned for Saturday, July 25th. Location, time and other details are soon to be released. If you would like to be a part of the Curtis Men 42nd Baseball Reunion contact Dave Bates at [alphaomegashootingsolutions@gmail.com](mailto:alphaomegashootingsolutions@gmail.com) or Cindy Curtis at [curtis58@outlook.com](mailto:curtis58@outlook.com) as soon as possible.**

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# In the Out-Door

By T.R. Mahle

## LIKE THUNDER CONTAINED WITHIN FEATHERS



began in darkness. Not the empty kind, but the kind alive with anticipation. Stepping outside, the air held that unmistakable spring chill, cool enough to see your breath, but more gentle than the bite of winter.

The day started long before sunrise. It was 4:00 a.m. on a Spring morning in 1982, and I was driving to **Grafton, West Virginia** for my first ever turkey hunt. Armed with nothing more than ambition and an invitation from my cousin, I had no turkey calls, no "turkey gun," sparse camouflage, and most importantly...no real understanding of what turkey hunting was all about. I was nervous but excited and not quite sure what to expect.

You see, at that time, turkey hunting was just starting to gather momentum in Greene County as the number of turkeys started to increase. West Virginia had a smaller but more established population of turkeys already, and it was a wonderful place to learn the art of turkey hunting.

Being a novice turkey hunter, the plan was for me to be the "shooter," and my cousin would do all the "calling." After meeting up, we started a long walk that would wind us through the woods to the very top of a ridge. It was a cool, cloudy morning, and the woods were quiet and dark. This was familiar terrain for my cousin, retracing paths worn down by years of traditions. He seemed to glide through the dark like a silent predator. Keeping up was no easy task.

I had not anticipated the climb, and I was very overdressed. Sweating profusely from the long steep walk, I was struggling to keep my glasses from fogging up. A fast-paced climb through the woods, in the dark, with foggy glasses was not how I envisioned the morning unfolding.

Still dark, we finally reached our destination at the top of the ridge, and I was able to catch my breath and relax for a few minutes. As my breathing slowly returned to normal and my glasses cleared, I vividly remember sitting in the tall grass of that dark field. The clouds were starting to thin, revealing a small patch of still sparkling stars. Every sound seemed louder than usual, and there was the unmistakable smell of spring blossoms hidden in the dark.

As the sky slowly began to lighten, the forest seemed to wake up. Birds started chirping, crows started calling, squirrels were stirring, and then we heard it...a gobble echoing through the trees, like **thunder contained within feathers!**

My heart started pounding. It was real now. We quickly maneuvered across the open field to “get into position.” I was instructed to “*Sit by that tree and point your gun that way.*” I tried to stay still, just like I had been told, and listened carefully as the old gobbler sounded off time-after-time.

My cousin was considered an “expert caller” and hunting with him was both a privilege and an education for me. I listened as he serenaded the gobbler with soft purr’s, clucks, and yelps. Each gobble seemed closer and closer. The anticipation of the gobbler’s arrival was the hardest part. Every minute stretched out, and I had to fight the urge to move my now numb legs. Then, finally, I saw it. A tom stepping cautiously into view. Its giant tail fan and feathers catching the early morning light. It was both beautiful and intense, and for a moment I just watched in awe.

When the moment came, I froze as if the bird could sense my presence. I focused, took a breath, and followed through. Afterward, a mix of excitement, respect, and

gratitude washed over me. My first turkey hunt wasn’t just about the harvest...it was about patience, learning, and experiencing the outdoors in a whole new way.

Some 40 years later, it’s not the number of birds taken that stays with me. It’s the feeling of those mornings, the chill in the air, the sun rises, the echoes of a gobble rolling through the hills. Now, the first real warmth of spring always carries a promise, and for me it’s still the promise of turkey season.

Long before the woods turn fully green, before the fields lose their winter-worn look, there is that quiet stretch of mornings when the world seems to wake up slowly, and I thoroughly enjoy waking up with it. Personally, there is not much I would rather do in the early hours of spring than hunt turkey...so much excitement packed into a brief period.

There were many more hunts with my cousin over the years, and he taught me countless things about hunting turkeys before his passing. Even now, years later, what lingers isn’t just the hunts themselves, but the feeling of being there, of sharing those quiet spring mornings with a family friend.

However, what I remember, what sticks with me the most, is the ritual: getting ready the night before, testing

my calls, the way the house felt different knowing I’d be leaving it long before sunrise. Sleep usually came lightly the night before with half-dreams of distant gobbles echoing through the timber.

One of my favorite memories of those early hunts with my cousin was gathering morel mushrooms while hunting. We would swing by his house when traveling between hunting destinations to drop them off. When we returned at the end of the hunt, for lunch, we were always treated to fried morel and bacon sandwiches with fresh rhubarb pie and ice cream for dessert.

Turkey season isn’t just something you do. It’s something you return to, year after year. It sends a quiet thrill through your chest when you hear that first gobble, no matter how many seasons have come and gone. It reminds you of how to listen, not just for the call of a bird, but for the quiet language of the woods. In that moment, you are connected to every hunter who has ever stood still in a half-light morning, listening for that rolling thunder contained in feathers. And in those moments of stillness, you often find more than what you came for.

*This article is dedicated to **Pastor David E. Maley...** he always had time to take me turkey hunting!*



GreeneScene by Elizabeth Durbin

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A man wearing a cap with a headlamp, glasses, and a jacket is smiling and holding a large fish. He is wearing yellow and orange fishing gear. The background is a teal and orange geometric pattern.



**H**enry David Thoreau saw spring as nature's quiet awakening, a season where renewal speaks through every budding leaf and flowing stream. His words capture the delicate balance between stillness and growth, reminding us to pause and observe.

By pairing his reflections with GreeneScene photos, each caption becomes more than description. It becomes a moment of connection, inviting our readers to experience the subtle beauty and thoughtful rhythm of the nature that surrounds us in these rolling hills.

*The spring advances in spite of snow and ice, and even cold.*

*It is chiefly the spring birds that I hear at this hour, and in each dawn the spring is thus revived.*

*They were pleasant spring days, in which the winter of man's discontent was thawing as well as the Earth.*

*No mortal is alert enough to be present at the first dawn of spring.*

*The very sound of men's work reminds me of the coming spring.*

*How silent are the footsteps  
of Spring!*

*Then the gentle, spring-like  
rain begins, and we turn  
around.*

*The first pleasant days of  
spring come out like a squirrel  
and go in again.*

*The voices of school children  
sound like spring.*

*The day is the epitome of the year.  
The night is the winter, the morning  
and evening are the spring and the fall,  
and the noon is the summer.*

*Shall a man not have his spring  
as well as the plants?*

# OUTDOOR SPOTLIGHT: MAJESTIC BULLS, WHITE SHEEP AND BLACK DEATH

By T.R. Mahle



The *Outdoor Section* of the *Greene Scene Magazine*, is extremely excited to announce our first in a series of articles that will be spotlighting an accomplished “outdoor” individual. This new series of articles will be celebrating the stories, skills, and traditions of successful hunters from around Greene County.

These special articles will explore the experiences of individuals who have mastered their craft through patience, knowledge, and respect for nature. Each feature will highlight not only remarkable achievements in the field, but also the dedication, preparation, and ethical practices that define responsible hunting.

Readers can expect in-depth profiles, vivid storytelling, and practical insights drawn from real-life pursuits. From tracking elusive game in rugged wilderness, to understanding animal behavior, the series will present a well-rounded perspective on local hunting legends. By focusing on personal journeys and lessons learned, these articles will inspire appreciation for the outdoors and the skills required to thrive within it.

Our inaugural outdoor icon is **Will Orndoff**. Born in Winchester VA, Will moved to Greene County in the late 1970s. Having retired as a Drilling Engineer in 2005, Will worked all over the U.S., specializing in oil drilling and drilling air shafts for mines. In 1995, Will opened **Orndoff Sporting Goods** in Graysville. The business also doubles as a very impressive trophy room that houses all the significant trophies that he has taken over the years.

When you walk in, your eyes are immediately drawn to two large Cape Buffalos. There are also several African plains game mounts, elk, deer, moose, kudu, a mountain lion, zebra, warthogs, a ram, and many other animals. The mounts themselves are reason enough to visit the store.

Will has invested a lifetime into his obsession for hunting big game, and his success is very impressive to say the least. Will had his first hunt at the age of eight years old. His hunting journey is extensive and has led him to eleven states and two continents in pursuit of his passion.

In addition to Pennsylvania, he has hunted in West Virginia, Georgia, and most of the western states. Will has also hunted in Alaska (3 times), Canada (6 times), and Africa (3 times). These hunts are not for the faint of heart. They require knowledge, patience, and a sheer desire to be successful. Many of these hunts are physically demanding and take place over rugged terrain in all conditions.

Nothing beats youth. If you are interested in pursuing some of these animals, Will suggests starting as early as your wallet will allow, and it's important to do your homework. Hunting



is no longer a guarantee, with many states using a lottery system to distribute license.

Hunting is also evolving into a “rich man’s sport” with tags for many species costing thousands of dollars. A Dall Ram hunt can cost you \$30,000-\$55,000...Stone sheep, \$80,000-\$105,000, Cape Buffalo \$10,000-\$20,000, and that is just for the hunt...you still need to get there.

Many outfitters are also incorporating what they call “Trophy Hunts” at an even higher price. With that being said, if you have the money, the time, and are in reasonably decent shape, there are some great adventures awaiting you. Alaska, Canada, and Africa all require hunters to use guides.

*I asked Will to elaborate on some of his favorite hunts. “The Dall sheep and Moose hunt in the Yukon territory was by far*

*my most memorable hunt...the day-and-a-half horse ride into the mountains, the wildlife, and the sheer beauty of the Yukon is beyond imagination.”*

Hunting Dall sheep is considered one of the most challenging and rewarding pursuits in North American big game hunting. These white-coated sheep inhabit steep, rocky terrain that demands exceptional physical fitness, careful planning, and mental resilience from hunters. Dall sheep are known for their keen eyesight and wariness, making a successful stalk both difficult and exhilarating.

This particular ram hunt was a physically demanding hunt, up and down the mountains daily from a spike camp looking for a mature legal ram (*one horn must complete a full 360-degree curl*). Several rams were spotted, and they began the long trek to

the top of the mountain. Once there, after taking a break, they searched for the rams and unfortunately, they were nowhere to be seen. Disappointed, they sat there glassing for a while and all at once, the rams appeared far below them and were running away... Will settled the cross hairs on the biggest ram and one well-placed shot put the big guy on the ground.

The second tag, the moose, was hunted in the thick brush of the valleys. The PH (*professional hunter*) miraculously spotted a large moose in the brush and the stalk was on. Again, with a well-placed shot, the giant moose was on the ground. After gutting the animal, the decision was made to return the next day with the horses to retrieve the meat and horns.

Unfortunately, a heavy fog had rolled into the area adding another level of anxiety to the adventure...you see, this is also grizzly territory, and the thought of a grizzly bear charging out of the fog was something no one was comfortable with, especially with a dead moose on the ground.

*After arriving at the kill site, it was discovered that a bear had indeed been feeding on the gut pile. Will was instructed by the PH to stand guard. With his rifle in hand, he scanned the dense fog relentlessly for any kind of movement while the guides prepared the moose for transportation. "That was a very tense situation and an unpleasant feeling scanning the fog looking for a charging bear...a bear that thankfully never showed."*

The second location on Will's list of memorable hunts took place on the **Timbavati Preserve**, a 150,000-acre area in South

Africa for cape buffalo. The preserve borders the **Kruger National Park**. The animals are free to roam from the park to the preserve and on the fourth day of the hunt the PH spotted a good bull.

**After a failed attempt to ambush the bull, spoiled by the wind, the chase was on. After a long and tiring chase, the bull was finally spotted in a mud hole (the buffalo cover themselves in mud to protect themselves from insects and the sun). Sneaking to within forty yards of the bull, looking through a small opening in the brush, the big 357 H&H magnum roared. The bull lunged forward but did not go down. Repositioning for the second shot, the bull spotted their movement and immediately charged them.**

*The bull was fast and closing the distance quickly. "All I can remember was looking through the scope and seeing a black mass." Luckily, the second shot found the vitals, and the bull collapsed... ten steps from Will's feet. "The thrill of the hunt, the adrenaline rush, words cannot define the moment of truth."*

Cape Buffalo... "you-it-death", "God's cattle", "Syncerus Caffer", and "black death"... are all words to describe the very capable adversary. The locals say they look at you like you owe them money, and they are coming to collect it. A male buffalo

can weigh up to 1,800 pounds. They are unpredictable and extremely aggressive, making them one of Africa's "Big Five" dangerous animals. They are responsible for over two hundred deaths yearly.

Will's hunting boots have a few miles on them now, and he has opted to do more hunting on less risky terrain. Leaving the rugged mountains to the young at heart, looking down the barrel of a shotgun at upland game birds is now a favorite pastime. Easier walking, watching the dogs work, and going back to the camp for a cooked meal and a hot shower takes the place of a cold tent on the side of a mountain.

*Will wrapped up our conversation by saying, "Hunting takes me back to the days of the pioneers who hunted to survive...the solitude, the adventure, and being one-on-one with the animal. That's what it's all about."*

*If you would like to recommend someone for consideration in future issues, please forward the information to: [info@greenescenemagazine.com](mailto:info@greenescenemagazine.com)*



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# FROM DIAGNOSIS TO ADVOCACY: A SMALL-TOWN CANCER JOURNEY

By Brittany Groover

*The following is Part One of a reader's response to a feature in our April edition.*



The biggest lesson I have learned from cancer is that **there is no finish line**. Not in the way people imagine. You do not cross some magical point where everything goes back to normal and you get your old life handed back to you. Instead, at the very moment of diagnosis, you step into a new starting point. Ready or not, you're immediately thrown into a new chapter. You're about to begin creating a new version of yourself you never asked to meet, but you learn to grow into anyway.

As I write this, it is April 8. **I just finished reading Bret Moore's articles in the April issue of The GreeneScene about the big role of the small-town doctor** and who killed the small-town doctor. That piece hit me hard. I'm a 32-year-old lifelong Dilliner resident who was diagnosed with Stage 3A melanoma at 27 — just across the bridge, by a small-town doctor: Dr. English.

I now have another small-town doctor, Dr. Heselton in Greensboro, who has been doing everything to keep me alive for the last five years as I have dealt with every side effect the immunotherapy drug Keytruda threw at me, including Stevens-Johnson syndrome — a condition where a medication causes a full-body rash and can quickly shut down organs and become fatal. Yes. Brutal stuff. Terrifying stuff. Too terrifying for a 27-year-old.

I was an 11-year-old student at Bobtown Elementary School when I lost my father to MS at the end of sixth grade. I thought that was the worst thing I would ever have to deal with in my life. At least trauma-wise. I was wrong.



## Learning to Navigate

I think I can speak for us all when I say, from the moment of diagnosis, you think you are running toward something: answers, clarity, a white-and-black checkered line. A moment where someone tells you, “OK, you are done.” But the truth is you are walking into a life that keeps unfolding. **You learn and grow and change in ways you never expected.** And the whole time, in the back of your mind, you are searching for a finish line that does not exist. Cancer does not give you that. It gives you a journey — and that journey becomes part of you forever.

I knew melanoma was skin cancer, but that was about it. I did not know what an oncologist was. I did not understand what “the deadliest form of skin cancer” actually meant. I was still in my 20s. Mortality did not feel real.. minus the dad thing... I thought I was too young to die. Or at least history could not repeat itself. My son was not even six years old... and you're telling me I have cancer? Impossible. I was wrong again.

Then suddenly I was being slid into PET scan machines. I was waking up from surgeries I couldn't even pronounce. Doctors talked at me, not to me, using words I had never heard. I did not know what to ask. I did not know where to look for information I could trust. I was scared to search online because I didn't know what was real and what was misinformation, so I just kept showing up — one appointment at a time. One step at a time. That was all I could do.

Those steps were what taught me. Not the big dramatic moments, but the small, quiet ones — the ones where I was just trying to get through the day.

## The Journey

Sometimes other patients look at me funny, sometimes with anger even, when I used the word **journey**. I understand why. It can sound cliché, or like I'm putting a pretty pink bow on something as horrific as cancer. I'm not doing that. To me, it is the only word that makes sense.

Everyone's cancer journey is different. Everyone's path — and pain — looks different. But it is a journey because it changes you. It teaches you. It forces you to grow in ways you never wanted.

It does not end when treatment ends. It does not even end when there's no evidence of disease. On a personal note: if I can get through 2026 without a recurrence, I will be discharged from treatment completely. For now, I am a survivor of Stage 3A melanoma — the deadliest form of skin cancer — the thing that tried to take me out before I even turned 30.

I decided to learn everything about my diagnosis and become a **patient advocate** because I felt like I had been in a car crash that went on for two years. When I got out, I had no idea what happened to me or my body. The wild part is that, the whole time I was in treatment, I thought I was Stage 2B. Miscommunication plus an oncologist who assumed I understood more than I did was the root cause. This was someone who had been in the job so long she forgot what it feels like to be brand new to cancer. I did not know the right questions. I did not know the vocabulary. I did not know how to advocate for myself yet. I was just trying to stay alive.

*(Part 2 will follow in next month's edition)*



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# CONFESSIONS OF AN UN-HANDY MAN

By Bret Moore

I realize this is our Home and Garden issue, and as editor I should contribute some meaningful copy. However, it might as well be our quantum physics or Byzantine art edition as far as my knowledge and skill extends.

I really wish I were a handyman, but I am quite aware that I'm a jack-of-no-trades.

**For me, there is a law of the universe no one talks about, and it is this: every home project requires at least three trips to the hardware store.**

The first trip is fueled by optimism. I stride in like a confident adult who owns tools. I have a list. I've measured. Twice. I nod knowingly at things like "drywall anchors" and "matte finish." I even decline help because of my false bravado and foolish pride. I leave with a cart full of supplies and the intoxicating belief that I will finish my project in time to watch the second game on a Saturday afternoon.

I will not. The second trip happens 15 minutes into the project.

This is when I discover the screws I bought are somehow both too short and too long. The drill bit I "definitely owned" is a myth. The paint color labeled "Soft Linen" is more like "Ugly Banana." I return to the store, slightly sweaty, carrying a mysterious metal bracket I'm hoping someone can identify. This time I accept help from a teenager named Aiden who knows more than I ever will.

I go home again. Surely, now well prepared. Incorrect.

The third trip is emotional. This is where I buy the thing I was trying to avoid buying. The better anchor. The special wrench. The upgraded faucet. I also stop at McDonalds and purchase a stress snack because I deserve it.

If I'm lucky and the task is simple, by the end of the day, the project is completed (poorly). I've spent twice my budget and learned nothing measurable. However, my pride keeps me from reaching out and finding someone to do it right.

I understand a new rug, a bigger picture, or a slight furniture adjustment can hide any imperfections in my well-intentioned efforts.

Unfortunately, when I finally sit down to relax (because I've missed the second game), the television is on the HGTV channel.

My already pummeled masculinity takes another hit as I watch back-to-back home renovation shows hosted by women who can install elaborate, perfect crown molding before I can locate the stud finder.

Somewhere between their perfectly executed kitchen demo and a flawless tile backsplash, I begin to feel... unnecessary.

These women walk into a house, glance at a wall, and calmly say things like, "We'll just knock this out and reframe the load-bearing beam." Just? JUST? I once "just" tried to hang a curtain rod and ended up inventing six new swear words and a hole that still needs spackling (If I only knew how to do that).

On these shows, these women swing sledgehammers with the confidence of Norse gods. Their ponytails remain perky and dust-free. They discuss grout lines the way sommeliers discuss wine. Meanwhile, I Google phrases like "is drywall supposed to crumble?" and "how serious is hitting a pipe?"

I grew up believing that at some point, manhood would include an innate understanding of lumber. That I would one day nod thoughtfully in a hardware store and say things like, "Ah yes, quarter-inch lag bolts." Instead, I stand in the fastener aisle like I've wandered into a Halloween corn maze.

The most humbling part is these ladies' casual competence. They don't argue with the drill. The drill obeys. When I use a drill, it makes a noise that sounds like it's been shoved into a cat.

And the confidence! They say, "We ran into a little setback," which translates to, "We discovered a family of raccoons living inside the electrical panel, but we handled it before the commercial

break." If I discovered raccoons in my wall, I would sell the house.

I try to reclaim some dignity by offering commentary from the couch. "Well, I would've done so-and so," I mutter as I clutch the remote control that also nightly challenges my intelligence. An amused voice from the other side of the couch reminds me I once installed a shelf upside down.

There's also the aesthetic element. These women transform a crumbling disaster into a magazine spread in 42 minutes (including commercials). My attempts at home projects inevitably end with Tylenol, a heating pad, and an internet search for an expert to fix my mess.

Maybe the lesson isn't that I've lost my masculinity. Maybe true strength is admitting that someone else is better at something — and asking them which drill bit I should be using.

So now when I watch these shows, I don't feel emasculated. I feel inspired. ....Well, maybe slightly threatened.

And if anyone needs me, I'll be at the hardware store. For the fourth time.



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# WAYNESBURG UNIVERSITY UNDERTAKES ACADEMIC PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION

In recent years, colleges and universities across the country have increasingly eliminated traditional academic majors, particularly in the humanities and liberal arts. They have reallocated resources toward more career-oriented and high-demand fields. This trend reflects a broad transformation in higher education driven by financial pressures, shifting student preferences, and changing labor market demands.

In February, Waynesburg University announced its “academic program prioritization” results, after a three-year in-depth strategic review process. **Twenty academic programs will be phased out, 17 will be modified, and five will pause enrollment.** Many of these changes were proactively proposed by the Department Chairs.

Waynesburg University students with declared majors in affected programs will be able to continue their programs through their expected graduation, but incoming students will not be able to declare the phased-out majors.

However, the realignment at Waynesburg University has not taken the form of sweeping major eliminations (like some

larger universities such as WVU). Instead, the University focused on a strategic restructuring of their curriculum, programs, and resources to position itself for growth in the future.

**Vice-President for University Relations Stacey Brodak told the Yellow Jacket “The Academic Program Prioritization was a significant process. The main reason for these changes is to modernize our curriculum and create opportunities to add new programs in the future that are relevant to the job market, student interests, and the workforce needs of our region.”**

According to an interview with the university’s *Yellow Jacket* newspaper, Provost Dr. Mindy Walls explained this process has been going on for several years. “We began three years ago looking at course optimization. Last year, we had a consulting firm come in and look at everything to help us improve efficiency. It was recommended by them that we take a holistic look at our curriculum.”

Prior to the Academic Program Prioritization, the university also redesigned its general education curriculum model to include greater flexibility for students to customize

coursework, while maintaining a liberal arts foundation. However, that foundation is also integrated with career-relevant focus.

The faculty and administrators enacted these changes to both the general education curriculum and the academic programs based on strategic recommendations from both its accrediting body and a consulting firm. In addition, they considered program-level qualitative data, and quantitative data, such as enrollment trends, program costs and future job-market demand. Additionally, input was received from faculty, alumni, students, employers and corporate partners.

Walls continued, “These data informed decisions by the board of trustees came after studying and reviewing the reports generated by the academic prioritization process. The board of trustees made the decisions with the University’s best interest at heart.”

**However, the changes also include the opportunity for the development of new programs and more experiential learning opportunities.** This includes expansion tied to new assets (e.g., donated farms used for academic programming and applied learning) and growth in professional and applied

fields like nursing, counseling, forensic science, criminal justice and business (already strong areas at the university with recent investments).

Nationwide, the primary cause of this shift is declining enrollment in traditional majors such as English, history, philosophy, and foreign languages. Over the past decade, the number of degrees awarded in these fields has dropped significantly. At the same time, students have gravitated toward STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and pre-professional programs, which are perceived as offering clearer career pathways and higher earning potential. This shift in demand has made it difficult for universities to justify maintaining low-enrollment programs.

At a recent press conference in Alumni Hall addressing the changes, University President Doug Lee explained, “You really love a place, but sometimes you have to do a hard thing. Wisely spending each and every tuition dollar on programs that directly affect student outcomes is part of our mission. This is even more important today given the challenging dynamics of higher education.”

Public policy has also played a role in reshaping academic offerings. Some states have even introduced legislation requiring universities to review and eliminate programs with low enrollment or poor post-graduation outcomes. In Indiana, policymakers have pushed to cut hundreds of degree programs based on metrics such as student demand and graduate earnings. These policies reflect a growing emphasis on aligning higher education with workforce needs and economic productivity.

**Many institutions are investing heavily in areas such as data science, artificial intelligence, healthcare, and business. New interdisciplinary programs that combine technical skills with applied learning are also becoming more common. Traditional disciplines are being merged into broader, more marketable programs.**

Critics argue that eliminating traditional majors undermines the broader educational mission of universities. The humanities, they contend, play a crucial role in developing critical thinking, communication skills, and cultural awareness. Supporters of the trend, on the other hand, argue that these changes are necessary for institutions to remain financially viable and relevant in a rapidly evolving economy.

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## GREENE COUNTY MEMORIAL DAY SERVICES – 2026

The first Official Memorial Day was celebrated on May 30, 1868 at Arlington National Cemetery.

This year, we will celebrate the 158th Memorial Day



### Sunday - May 24, 2026

Four separate programs will be held across the County as follows:

#### James T. Maxon American Legion Post No. 992 Mt. Morris, PA

Services as follows:

- **11:00 am** - Services at Kiger Cemetery - HG/FS
- **11:20 am** - Services at Claughton Chapel Cemetery- HG/FS

#### Garard Fort Cemetery

- **11:00 am** - Garard Fort Cemetery Service
- **Music by:** Mapletown Band
- **Guest Speaker:** Todd Moore
- **Follow with salute** to the deceased, and placement of the wreath at the Monuments. HG/FS
- **Greene County Honor Guard** will participate in the service

#### Greensboro Veteran of Foreign Wars Post No. 6303

Services as follows:

- **1:00 pm** - Greensboro VFW Honor Roll
- **Guest Speaker:** Paul Walker
- **Music by:** Post 400 American Legion Band (Directed by Frank Ricco).
- **Followed by a salute** to the deceased and the Greensboro VFW Officers placing the wreath at the Honor Roll
- **Greene County Honor Guard:** will be doing the Military Honors

#### Brooks - Crago American Legion Post No. 816 of Rices Landing

Services as follows:

- **2:00 pm** - Parade will begin at the post and proceed to the Honor Roll located between the Hewitt Cemetery & Hewitt Presbyterian Church.
- **Participants:** Jefferson-Morgan High School Band, Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts of Rices Landing, and the Rices Landing Volunteer Fire Department.
- **Guest Speaker:** TBA
- **Followed by a salute** to the deceased and placement of the wreath at the Honor Roll. HG/FS
- **Following this service,** another program will be held at Crucible/St Mary's Cemetery Honor Roll. HG/FS

• Refreshments will be served at the Rices Landing American Legion immediately following

### Monday - May 25, 2026

Five separate programs will be held across the County as follows:

#### James T. Maxon American Legion Post No. 992 Mt. Morris

Services as follow:

- **10:00 am** - Services at the Mt. Morris United Methodist Church
- **11:00 am** - Parade from the Mt. Morris United Methodist Church to the creek with a salute to the Navy by throwing a flower into the creek.
- **12:00 pm** - Ceremonies at the Cedar Grove Cemetery
- **Guest Speaker:** Greene County Commissioner Jared Edgreen
- **Followed with salute** to the deceased, and placement of the wreath at the Monument. HG/FS
- **Veterans Lunch** at the Mt. Morris American Legion Social Hall immediately following

#### Filer-Sadlek Post No. 954 Jefferson, PA

Services as follows:

- **10:30 am** - Jefferson Cemetery with a salute to the deceased and wreath placement at the Honor Roll. HG/FS
- **11:00 am** - Mather Honor Roll/ Post Office
- **Guest Speaker:** Pastor Wendell Bates
- **Music by:** Jefferson Morgan Band - SAL members
- **Followed with salute** to the deceased, and placement of the wreath at the Monuments. HG/FS
- **11:30 am** - Service at the Veteran's section of the Greene County Memorial Cemetery, with a salute to the deceased and wreath placed at the base of the American Flag. HG/FS
- **Immediately Following:** A light lunch will be provided

#### American Legion - Greene County Veterans Memorial Park Ceremony

- **11:00 am** - Memorial Day Ceremony
- **Welcome:** Don Martin
- **Opening Prayer:** Zane Mitchell
- **Invocation**
- **General Logans Order:** Gary Milovac
- **Guest Speaker:** Zane Mitchell
- **Followed with Greene County Honor Guard saluting** to the deceased, and placement of the wreath at the Monument. HG/FS
- **Closing Prayer:** Zane Mitchell - Greene County Veterans Memorial Park, 900 Rolling Meadows Road, Waynesburg, PA 15370

#### Jefferson Borough Memorial Day Parade

- **11:30 am** - Parade Starts at Jefferson Firehall and ends at JM High School

#### Carmichaels American Legion Post No. 400

Services as follows:

- **12:00 pm** - Laurel Point Cemetery Services
- **Frank Ricco & the American Legion Post Band** performing the National Anthem.
- **Guest Speaker:** TBA
- **Reading of General Logan's Orders**
- **Presentation of the Wreath**
- **American Flag presented, followed by a prayer**
- **Immediately following** is a light lunch located at the Carmichaels American Legion



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## CARROT CAKE RECIPE

From Direct Results Staff Member Olivia Kesty

### Ingredients

2 Cups of Flour	4 Eggs
2 Cups of Sugar	1 Cup of oil
2 TSP Baking Powder	4 Cups Grated Carrots
1 TSP Salt	½ Cup of Nuts (Optional)
2 TSP Cinnamon	

### Directions

Combine flour, sugar, salt, baking powder, and cinnamon in a bowl.  
In a separate bowl mix eggs and oil – beat until light.  
Add flour mixture to eggs (Combine until smooth)  
Add Carrots and nuts.

Grease and flour 3 round cake pans.  
Bake @ 350 for 25-30 minutes

### Icing:

Combine 8 oz. cream cheese, 1 stick of butter, ¾ box of powdered sugar,  
1 Tsp vanilla, add a “little” milk. Then Ice



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DEADLINE MAY 12TH

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- Highlight upcoming July 4th events and celebrations
- Feature stories, photos, and local history tied to America's journey

#### ★ THE CELEBRATION COMMEMORATIVE EDITION #2 — AUG 2026 ★

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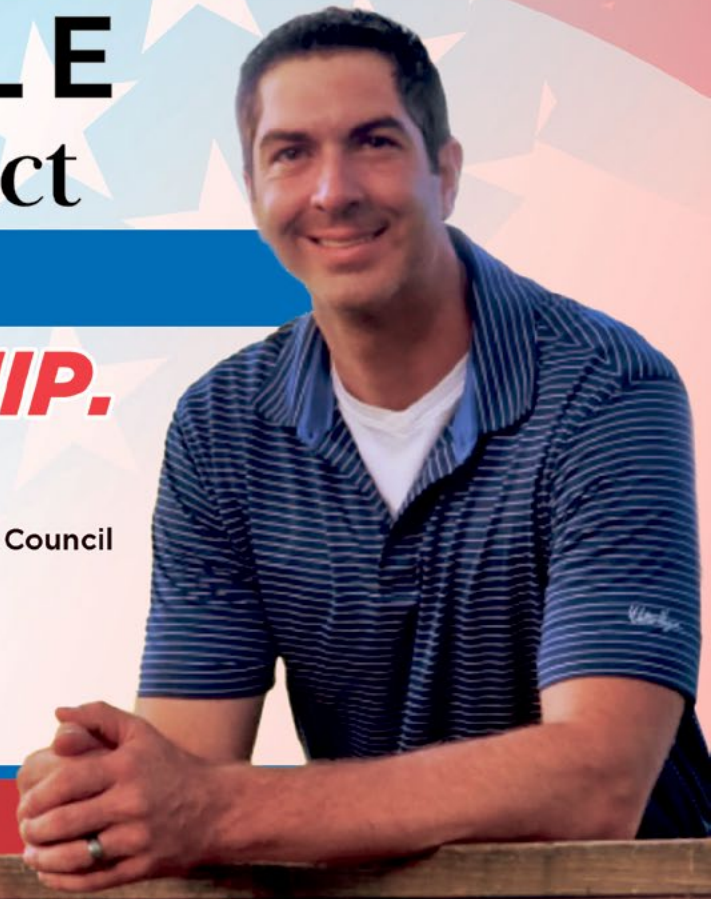
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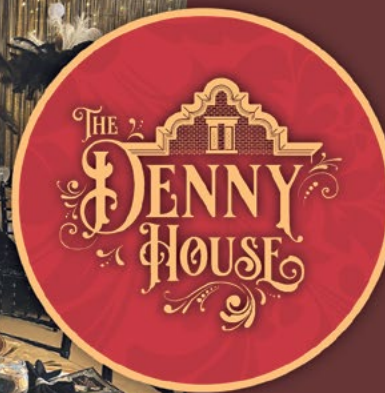
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# CARMICHAELS COUPLE EXPANDS THE LOCAL FOOD SCENE WITH ALL-AMERICAN FARE

**P**.A. Poppers, LLC was born from a shared love of vendor events, outdoor markets, and a simple conversation between a husband and wife during a car ride. With a vision of building a small weekend business to enjoy together in retirement, Bobby and Kim Thompson of Carmichaels turned that idea into reality. After months of prayer, research, and navigating licensing, permits, insurance, and equipment purchases, their dream officially took shape.

The business launched in December 2021 as a mobile kettle corn stand, operating out of a rented U-Haul trailer with a 10'x10' pop-up tent. What began as a modest setup quickly grew. By 2023, P.A. Poppers expanded operations and became licensed to serve customers in West Virginia as well.

As demand increased, so did the business. A dedicated trailer was purchased, and the menu expanded beyond kettle corn to include fresh squeezed lemonade and boba lemonade. Over time, even more items were added, transforming P.A. Poppers into a diverse and popular event vendor.

What started as a "weekend business" quickly became much more. Today, P.A. Poppers is a full-time operation for Bobby, while Kim joins him evenings and weekends alongside her other employment. Despite their busy schedule, they remain committed to their faith, family, and spending time with their grandchildren whenever possible. They also enjoy camping, fishing, kayaking, and attending NASCAR races.

P.A. Poppers proudly serves a wide range of events, including vendor and craft shows, fairs, festivals, private parties, weddings, corporate events, appreciation events, and fundraisers for churches, schools, sports teams, and more.

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  - Seasonal Favorites
  - Candy Apples
  - Caramel Apples
- Caramel Apple Nachos

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P.A. Poppers, LLC is more than just a business—it's a family-driven passion dedicated to bringing fresh, fun, and flavorful experiences to every event.

*We at the GreeneScene Community Magazine would like to sincerely apologize for the misspelling in our April edition of the GreeneScene Community Magazine.*

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# Scene and Heard

By Dolly Throckmorton

## ANKLE DEEP COMMITMENT LEADS TO TOE-TAL FLEXIBILITY

Last month, we discussed the importance of stretching hamstrings. Another form of flexibility is *joint flexibility*. Muscles, tendons, and ligaments all go into action when we move a joint. Injury to these joints can obviously affect our range of motion.

We all know someone who had a knee replacement or rotator cuff surgery. Both surgeries require an enormous amount of PT sessions to get the patient back to their life. Shoulder, hip, and knee joint flexibility are vital and crucial to mobility. As we age, when we lose mobility in our joints due to pain, injury, surgery, or inactivity (yes, sitting is the new smoking), our lives are hugely altered.

I am going to share a few tips on one of the overlooked joints, the ankle. We do not even think about that sucker until we break it, sprain it, twist it, or trip. Because I am old, was a dance teacher for over 40 years, and have watched two of my children learn to walk again due to injury, I have spent lots of time thinking about and working on something called *dorsiflexion and plantarflexion*.

Simply, for my dancers out there, it is flexing and pointing your foot. For everyone else, it is pulling the toes toward the shin (dorsiflexion) and pointing the toes toward the



ground (plantarflexion). It seems like a remarkably simple concept, but as we age, we lose a ton of flexibility and mobility in this joint.

When we do, we may find ourselves tripping and falling more, shuffling, or slapping our feet down when we walk rather than walking heel to toe. We may even experience numbness, tingling, and loss of balance. Is there something we can do to help our ankle joint? Absolutely:

1. Seated with your legs straight out in front of you, pull your toes back toward your shins as far as you can. Again, like the hamstring, go to where you feel tension and hold. If you feel like you cannot do enough on your own, take a towel under the balls of your feet, and pull the ends back with your hands holding the ends of the towel. Find that sweet spot where you feel some tension, but you are not in pain! Hold and inhale/exhale for 15 seconds. You can repeat 2 more times.
2. Now, reverse it and point your toes toward the ground. Same inhale/exhale. You may like to keep the towel under the balls of the feet and apply a little resistance: pressing the towel down with your feet while holding on to the ends of the towel.
3. Finally, alternate between the two positions: Inhale for 4 as you pull the toes back (dorsiflexion) and exhale as you point the toes (plantarflexion). You can do ten sets of flexing and pointing the foot.
4. Placing yourself in front of a wall with both hands on the wall, put your right toes up the wall with your right heel staying on the ground as you stand on your left leg. Hold and inhale/exhale for 15-30 seconds. Repeat on other side. As your hamstrings become more flexible because you have been doing such a bang-up job freeing up those muscles with your hamstring stretches, you may be able to drop to your forearms on the wall. Initially, you may barely be able to place your toes up the wall, let alone the ball of your foot. Be patient and stay consistent. Believe me, it WILL become easier.

Happy Walking! Increasing dorsiflexion will help plantar fasciitis from which so many people suffer. Keeping the ankle joint flexible, strengthening the calf muscles (that's for next month), and increasing that range of motion can all help ease that fascia (that tissue connecting heel bone to toes down the arch of the foot).

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# HOBBY FARMING IN PENNSYLVANIA IS A GROWING TREND

By T.R. Mahle

Hobby farming in Pennsylvania has grown steadily as more people seek a slower pace of life, sustainable food sources, and a deeper connection to the land. Unlike commercial farming, hobby farming is typically done on a small scale, often alongside another primary occupation. Many Pennsylvanians are drawn to this lifestyle because of the state's rich agricultural heritage, fertile soil, and varied climate, which supports a wide range of crops and livestock.

Common hobby farms in Pennsylvania include vegetable gardens, small orchards, chicken coops for fresh eggs, and beekeeping for honey production. Some hobby farmers also raise goats or sheep, not only for products like milk and wool but also for land management. Our diverse landscape makes it possible for people to maintain small farms even without vast acreage.

However, hobby farming requires planning and commitment. Farmers must understand local zoning laws, and basic animal care. Costs for equipment, feed, and maintenance can add up, so it is rarely a profit-driven venture. Instead, the rewards are often personal such as fresh food, outdoor activity, and a sense of self-sufficiency.

**L & B Almosta Farm**, established in 2023, is operated by **Halie Gallagher**, her husband **Shane**, and their two boys **Landry & Brodee**. The farm is located in Waynesburg and operates on seven acres. The farm is a small but locally rooted agricultural business that reflects the character of Greene County.

The farm is home to chickens, ducks, goats, cows, donkeys, and any other animal that needs a safe home. Halie is a self-described "animal lover" and will stop at nothing to make sure any animal she encounters is safe, fed, and

has a place to stay. She is a "rescuer" and always puts the animals first.

People and animals are her priority, Halie stated, "everyone needs help now and then. If there is something we can do to help, we certainly will do it". Eggs are a primary product of the farm, and they are available for a "donation". If you are struggling and hungry, they are free.

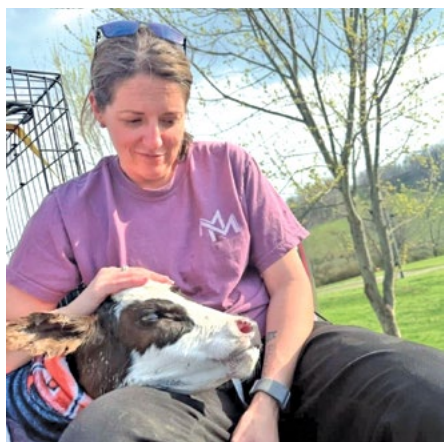
Another important aspect of farms like L & B Almosta Farm is their role in land stewardship. Maintaining this land helps preserve open space and contributes to environmental sustainability. Practices such as crop rotation, soil conservation, and responsible animal care are part of the growing movement.

In addition, local farms can serve as informal community hubs. Neighbors collaborate, share equipment, and assist one another during busy seasons like planting and harvesting.

Overall, L & B Almosta Farm represents the enduring importance of small farms in places like Greene County. This type of farm continues to play a quiet but vital role in sustaining both the local economy and the cultural landscape of southwestern Pennsylvania.



Shane Gallagher, playing with one of his calves.



Halie Gallagher, owner of L & B Almosta Farm.



Family of goats smiling for the camera.

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# BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT



**SONIC Serenity**

**GRAND OPENING**

**Come celebrate with us!**

**Saturday, May 2, 2026**

**NOON TO 4:00 PM**

Sonic Serenity bridges art and science to create a first-of-its-kind healing experience for the body, mind, and soul. Rooted in authenticity and designed for inclusion, we stand poised to become the tri-state area's trusted home for sound, light, and color therapy.

Greene County CTC Eats Food Truck will be set-up along with Practically Goods, The Crackpot Studio, and local author Erin Pierson. At 2:00 PM multi-dimensional artist Lee Ann Heltzel will help us share our story behind the creation of Sonic Serenity.

**Ribbon Cutting Ceremony - May 1st**

426 PA-88 Rd, Carmichaels, PA  
www.sonicserenityhealing.com

## COLOR YOUR CALM: A BRIGHTER WAY TO DE-STRESS IN CARMICHAELS



A new business in Carmichaels is offering an innovative wellness space to create a calming escape through the power of sound, light, and color. Designed to support stress reduction, **Sonic Serenity specializes in neurodivergent treatment approaches that honor each individual's unique sensory needs.** Whether you seek relaxation, balance, or mental clarity, they feel their carefully crafted environment provides a soothing experience to help you reset, recharge, and thrive in everyday life.

Founded by Tracy Zalar and Shelbee McCann, Sonic Serenity, is a mother-daughter wellness sanctuary that blends science, compassion, and frequency-based healing. They feel their journey from personal loss to collective purpose anchors the brand's authenticity, with Shelbee's lived experience of autism and Tracy's devotion to creating a safe, sacred space for healing.

According to Tracy, "Sonic Serenity is a haven for emotional regulation, deep rest, and sensory harmony."

Shelbee, a Certified Halotherapist, Trained Harmonic Egg Guardian, and Independent Quantum Living Advocate, serves as the manager. "Our sessions are designed as a guided sensory journey rather than a menu of separate treatments. Each guest moves through a carefully sequenced flow that supports the body's natural rhythm of relaxation, regulation, and renewal."

Tracy added, "At Sonic Serenity, we honor the sacred harmony of sound, light, and color as pathways to healing and alignment. Our mission is to create a sensory-safe sanctuary where every nervous system, neurotypical or neurodivergent, can release stress, restore balance, and reconnect with its true essence."

Their objectives are to combine sound, light, color, and vibration therapies with inclusivity and scientific foundations. They feel they are addressing a significant gap in the regional wellness scene by becoming the region's first neurodivergent wellness sanctuary to help customers nervous systems return to balance.

Opening May 4, they are located at 426 PA-88 Road. Their offerings include: The Harmonic Egg, a Salt Suite, Infinity Foot Detox, Negative Ion Rain, a Liquid Sound Table, a Terahertz Wand, and an Ocular Meditation Area. For more information, you can call 724-884-6363.



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## April Issue Contest Winners



**Easter Egg Hunt Contest Winner!**  
**Jaime Bogumit**  
(Pictured is Garret Bogumit)

Winners Not Pictured

**Where is this, Contest Winner!**

**Leona Block**

**The GreeneScene Podcast Trivia Time Contest**

**Tom Balsega**

**Person Place or Thing Contest Winner!**

**Jenna Hampson**

# A PIECE OF MY MIND

Random Thoughts, Reflections & Memories That Occupy Space in My Mind by Vicky Hughes



When I graduated from nursing school, I sat down to write my valedictory address and started it with a quote from one of my favorite movies, *Forrest Gump*. I've spent a lot of time recently reflecting on one of the core ideas of the film and wondering about how destiny and randomness can exist at the same time.

The idea of destiny is one of the central themes explored in the film, and it is expressed most clearly through the perspective of its main character. Rather than presenting a firm philosophical stance, the film embraces uncertainty, offering a gentle reflection on whether human lives are guided by fate, randomness, or a combination of both.

*Forrest said, "I don't know if we each have a destiny, or if we're all just floatin' around accidental-like on a breeze... but I think maybe it's both."*

This simple statement carries significant philosophical weight, especially because it comes from a character who often speaks plainly and without pretense. Forrest is not portrayed as a philosopher or intellectual, yet his observations about life often feel profound precisely because of

their simplicity.

Throughout the film, Forrest's life unfolds through a series of extraordinary historical events and personal encounters that seem entirely accidental. He finds himself at pivotal moments in American history. He becomes a college football star, serves in the Vietnam War, meets presidents, and influences cultural trends without ever deliberately seeking fame or recognition. These events appear to support the idea that life is shaped largely by chance. Forrest simply moves forward, following instructions he understands in a literal way, and yet he repeatedly ends up in situations that dramatically shape his future.

At the same time, the film subtly suggests that there may be something more than randomness at work. Forrest's unwavering kindness, loyalty, and persistence consistently lead him to meaningful relationships and opportunities. Even when events seem random, they often connect in ways that suggest a hidden order or purpose. His love for Jenny, his friendship with Bubba, and his bond with Lieutenant Dan all evolve through unpredictable circumstances, yet

each relationship becomes a defining part of his life story.

Looking back at my own life story, though not nearly as entertaining as Forrest's, I see many similarities. My life has been filled with so many opportunities, and I've worked relentlessly to build relationships. I like to think that I have a plan, and I know how to get where I'm going. However, when life steps in with unpredictability, I've learned to modify and adapt.

So, here's a piece of my mind... Life is not a puzzle with a single correct answer. Instead, it is a mixture of unpredictability and meaning, where individuals interpret events through their own experiences and beliefs. While people may not control everything that happens to them, they still shape their lives through how they respond to those events. Whether life is guided by destiny or randomness becomes less important than how one chooses to live within that uncertainty. Life may be unpredictable, but it is still meaningful, and perhaps the truth lies somewhere between fate and chance.

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- June 9 - C & T Acoustic, Sponsored by Waynesburg Rotary
- June 16 - Swingin' BopCats Big Band, Sponsored by Wayne & Connie Hart
- June 23 - Jason Kendall Band, Sponsored by Mark & Jessie Leidecker
- June 30 - The Classics Rock, Sponsored by Baily Insurance
- July 7 - Helicopter Collective, Sponsored by Community Bank
- July 21 - The Projects, Sponsored by Ross Tractor Sales
- July 28 - Top Shelf, Sponsored by Jay D Enterprises
- August 11 - Devon Cowell as Elvis & Johnny Cash, Sponsored by Direct Results & The Denny House
- August 18 - Marks Brothers Band, Sponsored by First Federal
- August 25 - Rick K Road Trip, Sponsored by Fox Ford

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# FAMOUS FARMERS QUIZ

WIN \$50



Test your knowledge of famous farmers from television, movies, and literature. Match each character to their story or show and see how many you can get right. From heroic homesteaders to quirky countryside icons, these farmers have left their mark on pop culture.


1. Jonathan Kent
2. Maximus Decimus Meridius
3. Farmer Hoggett
4. Jed Clampett
5. Otis Campbell
6. Hershel Greene
7. Farmer Maggot
8. Mr. Jones
9. Farmer McGregor
10. Pa Ingalls

- A. General who wanted to return to his farm
- B. Veterinarian/Farmer on the Walking Dead
- C. His son was a BIG help on the farm.
- D. Moved off the farm after a lucky strike
- E. Negligent owner of Animal Farm
- F. Took care of the little house on his farm
- G. Spent too much time in Andy's Jail
- H. Grumpy farmer who chased Peter Rabbit
- I. Loved his pig Babe
- J. Brave Hobbit farmer



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*GreeneScene by Sandy Wilson*

# SENATOR BARTOLOTTA ANNOUNCES, “NURSES FOR BARTOLOTTA” COALITION

Senator Camera Bartolotta announced the formation of the “Nurses for Bartolotta” coalition, a growing group of nurse practitioners, registered nurses, health care professionals, and patient advocates supporting her re-election campaign and her ongoing work to strengthen Pennsylvania’s health care system.

The coalition launched at a press conference in Southpointe, Washington County, where Senator Bartolotta was joined by more than a dozen nursing professionals from across the 46th Senatorial District.

According to a release from the senator’s office, Bartolotta has been a leading advocate for nurses and patients in Harrisburg, most notably as the prime sponsor of Senate Bill 25, which would grant full practice authority to nurse practitioners in Pennsylvania. Under current law, nurse practitioners must enter into costly and burdensome collaborative agreements.

Senate Bill 25 would align Pennsylvania with 28 other states – including several neighboring states – that have removed this mandate, allowing nurse practitioners to practice to the full extent of their training.

“Senator Bartolotta’s leadership on Senate Bill 25, along with her support for additional legislation to strengthen the nursing workforce, provides nurses with necessary tools and resources, and improve recruitment and training efforts, has earned her broad support from nurses throughout the district,” according to her office.

Dr. Jennifer Bowman, DNP, PMHNP, will serve as Chair of the Nurses for Bartolotta coalition.

“She has made expanding access to quality health care and supporting local nurses a top priority,” Bowman said at the press conference. “Because her district includes many rural areas, she has led legislative efforts to allow experienced nurse practitioners to open or expand practices in underserved commu-

nities. This reduces patient travel time and keeps care local, assisting hospitals and clinics that struggle to recruit physicians.”

Health care advocate Brian Mehalik, who works in the pharmaceutical industry, underscored the stakes for patients and providers across the Commonwealth.

“Support for Senator Bartolotta is critical if Pennsylvania wants to increase patient access to high-quality health care and reduce costs,” Mehalik said.

In her remarks, Senator Bartolotta highlighted the sacrifices and dedication of nurses across the district and the Commonwealth.

“Our nurses face high-stress situations every day,” she said. “They miss holidays and family events. They carry emotional burdens most people never see – all to save lives and care for our loved ones. They are the backbone of the 46th District, of Pennsylvania, and of our nation.”

The Nurses for Bartolotta coalition aims to engage and mobilize nursing professionals throughout the 46th Senatorial District to support policies and legislators who prioritize nurses and patient-centered care.

Senator Bartolotta represents the 46th Senatorial District, which includes Greene County, Washington County, and parts of Beaver County.

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