

# Chardon

2020-21

## magazine

Presented by the Chardon Chamber of Commerce, The Good News and The Geauga Times Courier

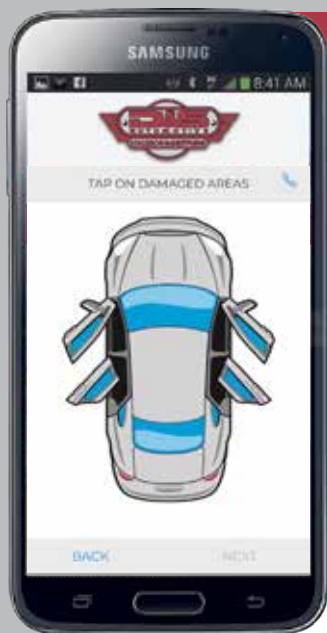




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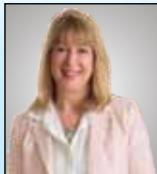
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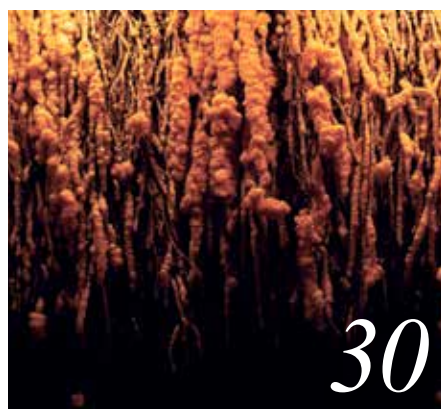
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# 2020 CALENDAR of EVENTS

## April

**April 11th** – Breakfast with the Easter Bunny & Easter Egg Hunt on the Square

**April 23rd-26th** – Geauga Maple Festival (Square)

## May

**May 1st** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – Garden Party

**May 28th** – Opening Day Chardon Municipal Pool



## June

**June 5th** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – Chalk Walk

**June 5th – September 11th** (Fridays)  
Chardon Square Assoc.  
Farmer's Market (Square)  
(Fridays) Concerts in the Park (Square)

**June 6th** – Chardon Square Assoc. Flea Market (Square)

**June 12th** – Chardon Chamber Golf Outing (Chardon Lakes Golf Course)

**June 13th** – Outdoor Amphitheater Concert – Chardon Polka Band (Big Creek)

Movies on the Square: "Frozen 2"

**June 14th** – Caveman Crawl 5K Run (The West Woods)

**June 20th** – Movie Night at Observatory Park – "Jumanji: The Next Level"

**June 27th** – Love Fest (Square)

## July

**July 3rd** – (Rain Date July 5th)  
Chardon Area Fireworks  
(Chardon High School)

Chardon Tomorrow  
First Friday – Main Street Mini Golf

**July 4th** – Old Glory Day (Square)  
Chardon Schools  
Foundation Firecracker 5K Run

**July 11th** – Dog Days of Summer (Square)  
Movie Night at Observatory Park – "The Martian"

Gauga Park District Flea Market  
(The West Woods)

**July 12th** – (Rain date July 19th)  
Chardon Chamber Classic Car & Bike Show (Square)

**July 18th** – Zucchini Festival (Square)  
Movies on the Square:  
"The Incredibles 2"

Outdoor Amphitheater Concert – Long Time Gone (Big Creek)

## August

**August 2nd** – Chardon Square Assoc. Arts Festival (Square)

Nature Arts Festival (Big Creek Park)

**August 4th** – National Night Out (Square)

**August 6th** – Chardon Square Assoc. Kids Fest & Kids Flea Market (Square)

**August 7th** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – Flashback Friday

**August 8th** – Movie Night at Observatory Park – "UP"

Chardon Tomorrow Brew Fest & 5K Run for Suds (Square)

**August 15th** – Movies on the Square: "Star Wars – Rise of Skywalker"

Outdoor Amphitheater Concert – Hiram Rapid Stumblers (Claridon Woodlands)

## September

**September 4th** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – Friday Night Lights

**September 12th** – Chardon Tomorrow Community Sidewalk & Garage Sale

**September 13th** – Chardon Square Assoc. Harvest Handmade Market (Square)

Kiwanis Cornroast (Square)



## October

**October 2nd** – Chardon Tomorrow First Fridays – History & Hauntings

**October 3rd** – (Rain Date Oct. 4th)  
Fall Fest (Square)

**October 3-4th** – Jump Into Fall Days (Swine Creek Reservation)

**October 31st** – Halloween on the Square

## November

**November 6th** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – Wine, Cheese & Jazz

**November 7th** – Holly Days Artisan Boutique (The West Woods)

**November 26th** – 5K Turkey Trot/Walk to Stop Trafficking (Square)

**November 28th** – Small Business Saturday



## December

**December 3rd** – Chardon Square Christmas Lighting

**December 4th** – Chardon Tomorrow First Friday – It's a Wonderful Life

**December 12th** Fire & Ice Festival: Home for the Holidays



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# Dear Readers,

*This sixth installment of the Chardon Magazine is just one of the many tools available to assist in achieving the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce's mission to promote, protect and serve the general business interests of the City of Chardon and the surrounding area. Additionally, we strive to create a unified public spirit within the community and would be remiss if we did not do our very best to promote all of the organizations*

*and events that call this area home.*

*Whether you are a lifelong resident of the city, one of the thousands of employees that work for a Chardon-based company or just happened to stumble upon one of our fine shops, eating establishments or events held on the historic Chardon Square, we are glad you have become part of our community in some way.*

*For more information on upcoming events or the community in general, please visit: [chardonchamber.com](http://chardonchamber.com) or [chardon.cc](http://chardon.cc). Thank you for choosing to be with us in Chardon.*

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**Dan Meleski**  
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**Jim McClintock**  
President of the Chardon Area  
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# It's a trifecta

Organizations join forces to promote the county seat

By JULIE HULLETT

**C**hardon, a city of about 5,000 residents, has three organizations working to promote it and its 350 or so businesses. Although intertwined, the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce, Chardon Tomorrow and the Chardon Square Association each play a unique role in bolstering the local shops, restaurants and nonprofit organizations.

In short, each organization has the same goal but a different approach to support the only city in Geauga County. The chamber connects businesses to other businesses and the community, according to the chamber Executive Director Stacia Clawson. Chardon Tomorrow is resident-driven and focuses on connectivity and economic vitality, she said, while the Chardon Square Association works to bring the community together for events on the square in the county seat.

"We're all strong in the shop local movement," Ms. Clawson said. "That's a great way to support us — shop local and keep dollars here in Chardon."



## Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce

Ms. Clawson described the chamber as a membership-driven organization with a goal of helping businesses prosper and grow. The

Chardon is in good hands. From left, Chardon Tomorrow Executive Director Mary Glauser, President of the Chardon Square Association Stephanie Talty and Executive Director of the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce Stacia Clawson work together to promote the Chardon area.

Photos by Michael Steinberg

Continued on page 10



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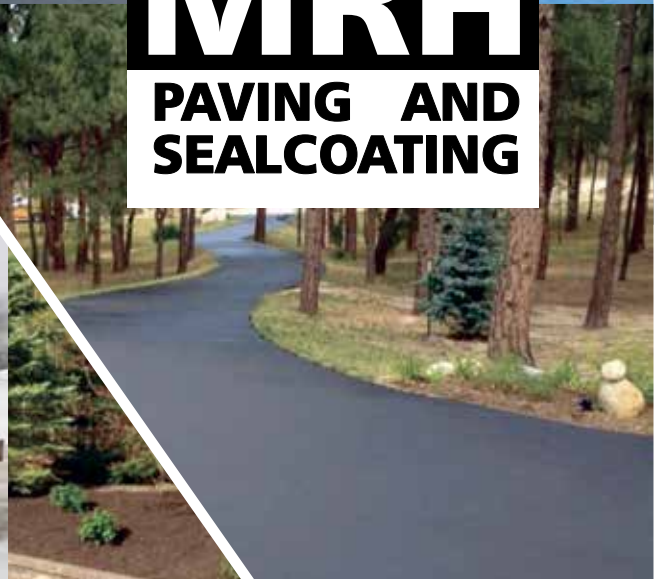
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## Continued from page 8

chamber hosts various monthly programs such as networking and educational opportunities for business owners to help them thrive in the Chardon area. Chamber membership is not limited to businesses.



**Clawson**

For example, the chamber hosts monthly luncheons with speakers on different topics, such as social media or Amish business protocol, according to Ms. Clawson. Another common activity is Business After Hours, a social hour for business owners.

"We provide referrals to people in the community, but the best referrals are when they work together," she said.

The chamber has 220 members but events are open to non-members. Ms. Clawson said that the member businesses range from small mom and pop shops to larger corporations. Several chamber members are the Chardon Local School District, Sugar Pines Farm and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center.

According to Ms. Clawson, the chamber offers various benefits to its members through advertising and sponsorships, discounts and more. Owners can promote their businesses for free through newsletters and are eligible for discounts on health and workers compensation insurance. All members are also listed

in the chamber's business directory, she said. In addition, the chamber encourages its members to be involved in community events, such as the annual Easter egg hunt, the car show in July and the Christmas tree lighting.

"One of our mission statements is to encourage a unified public spirit within the community," she said.

Chamber President Jim McClintock, owner of Company 119, mentioned the chamber's scholarship fund. The chamber awards at least one \$1,000 scholarship per year to a senior who resides in the Chardon Local School District and has applied to a college or a vocational program. He said that chamber member donations and proceeds from chamber events fund the scholarship.

Sam Hardesty, co-owner of Hardesty Imaging, said that the chamber helped her with her mindset and empowered her and her husband, Ian, to get their business off the ground. Hardesty Imaging is a multimedia company that helps small businesses grow through web design, video and photography.

**"It starts as empowerment," she said. "They empower you to know that what you're doing is within reach and you are a business owner and you can compete locally."**

After they joined the chamber, Ms. Clawson sent out an email blast asking members to come to a high school career fair. Ms. Hardesty attended and met her biggest client. Hardesty Imaging later moved into an office space and the business moved from a "side hustle" to a full time job, she said.

## Chardon Tomorrow

Chardon Tomorrow also aims to promote businesses, but works on solving specific issues while maintaining a high quality of life in the city. Executive Director Mary Glauser described Chardon Tomorrow as a community development organization that provides events for people to interact and enjoy themselves.



**Glauser**

"There's always something going on in Chardon," she said.

In January, Chardon Tomorrow kicked off its Chardon 20 for 20 campaign, which encourages people to walk or bike for 20 minutes, meet 20 new people, spend \$20 and give 20 minutes of service to an organization that improves the quality of life in the city.

Ms. Glauser said that Chardon Tomorrow's work is often "behind the scenes" as they work one-on-one with businesses to address specific issues. For example, she said that the



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organization helped pass Sunday liquor sales. Restaurant owners said that it was difficult to bring customers in for a Sunday brunch without a bloody mary or a mimosa.

"We got petitions, we got it on the ballot and we got it passed," she said.

This year, Ms. Glauser said that Chardon Tomorrow is working with the city officials to improve handicap parking on the square and considering increasing the parking time by the courthouse from two hours to four hours.

**"I don't know if we have the answers, but we want to explore different opportunities," Ms. Glauser said.**

Chardon Tomorrow also works to put on a multitude of events throughout the year in the city to keep residents feeling connected to their city and attract new potential residents. First Fridays are new in 2020, and there is an event with a different theme on the first Friday of every month, such as a game night.

Ms. Glauser mentioned various other events for all demographics, including Gen Yes and Bring on the Boom, open forums on meeting the needs of young people and older people. The Taste of Chardon, which was scheduled to take place on March 21, was new to the city this year. Brewfest is slated for Aug. 8, which will bring young professionals to the city.

"Whether attending or volunteering for an event, just being part of that community is so important," she said. "Find your passion and follow that."

Chardon Tomorrow also works directly with businesses before they open. Rae Greaves, owner of Polished, a new nail salon on the square, worked with Chardon Tomorrow before opening. Ms. Glauser put her in touch with a leasing agent and helped her apply for a small business grant. In addition, the two met to go over Ms. Greaves' business plan and grant application.

"I called [Ms. Glauser] before I told my parents," Ms. Greaves said. "She was my first phone call."

## Chardon Square Association

The Chardon Square Association focuses on the square and preserving its history while looking toward the future, according to Stephanie Talty, president of the organization. Ms. Talty also owns The Nest, a home goods store in Chardon. She said that the association holds as many as 12 events per year on the square to promote a sense of community and shopping local. The events kick off with the Easter egg hunt and pancake breakfast on April 11. This year is the 40th anniversary of the Chardon Square Association.

**"The square is the hub and the heart of Chardon, and it's gorgeous," Ms. Talty said. "We want to get involved."**

The association takes on projects that will



**Talty**

she said.

Ms. Talty said that the group meets monthly to brainstorm what capital projects they will take on. They're currently working on placing twinkle lights year-round on Main Street and

improve the city, she said. For example, it recently bought and donated 13 park benches to be placed at the square. There is also a seasonal giving garden and the food is donated to the food pantry at Pilgrim Christian Church,

covering utility boxes with wraps that are more aesthetically pleasing. Past projects include the courthouse lighting, the electronic message sign on the square, the new flagpole and the flower baskets. The funds raised from association events are used for the capital projects.

She said that their overarching goal is to preserve the integrity of the square. Both businesses and individual residents can be members.

"All the organizations work together. We're all united," she said. "We all have a common goal in mind to preserve Chardon. It's a small town community and we all work together to promote that in our own ways." ■

**CHARDON Ohio**

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<b>Old Glory Day</b> July 4	<b>Dog Day of Summer</b> July 11	<b>Movies on the Square</b> June 13, July 18, August 15	<b>Concerts in the Park</b> Fridays June 5 – September 11
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For a list of all events visit our calendar at [www.chardon.cc](http://www.chardon.cc)

f / cityofchardon

# Sudsy business

Love of goats inspires creation of artisan soaps

By **PARIS WOLFE**

**W**hen Kerry Willman was a child in the 1980s, she fell in love with the Little House on the Prairie series. The books detail life on a farm in Walnut Grove, Minnesota, in the 1870s and 1880s. “I love (the author) Laura Ingalls Wilder,” Ms. Willman said. “I always wanted a pretty little brown cow with long hair like she had.”

But, Ms. Willman grew up in Painesville City. Not exactly the place for a farm.

Things changed when she moved to Chardon Township in 2017. “I started acquiring animals,” she laughed, only slightly exaggerating. “I started with goats because they’re so funny and relatively easy to care for. I just fell in love with their little personalities.”

Ms. Willman didn’t jump in blind. She had done her research. Her family, including five children, had been involved with 4-H previously and gained farming skills.

The original goal was to breed the goats and make cheese from their milk. After exploring Ohio’s extensive raw milks laws and strict licensing requirements, Ms. Willman changed her mind.

The crafty Millennial moved on to crafting artisan soap. “I really just wanted to learn



Kerry Willman is the owner of Maple Creek Soap Company at WH Farm Inc. She fell in love with the “little personalities” of goats and uses goat milk in the creation of artisan soaps and other organic products.

Photos by Michael Johnson

how to make soap with goats’ milk,” she said. “But you can’t just buy a little lye. When you buy supplies to make soap, you buy a consid-

erable amount.”

The excess supplies led to more soap than a family could use. That’s why she started selling online, at the Chardon Farmers Market and eventually at various small businesses around Chardon.

As the soap business succeeded, Ms. Willman added more goats’ milk-based products. “I did more research on skin care and I started growing the product line from there,” she said. She incorporated her business –



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WH Farm Inc. – in 2018. She recently added Maple Creek Soap Company to the name.

Today she offers bar soaps, solid dishwashing blocks, laundry soap, bath soaks, facial scrubs, goats milk lotions, lip balms, Bug Off (a natural flea, tick and fly repelling pet shampoo), and hand-carved wooden soap dishes.

The advantage of hand-crafted goats' milk skin products has been extensively documented. Among these are exfoliating and hydrating properties. The gentle nature of the product is reputed good for those with eczema and psoriasis.

Customer Donna Barson, a stylist on Chardon Square, attests to the power of goats' milk products.

"When I found Kerry's products, I was getting tired of all the chemicals in bath and body products," she said. "I was trying to go more natural. Kerry had just started selling at the farmer's market. My daughter knew Kerry's daughter from school, and she talked me into trying them.

"I liked the idea that they were more natural and more economical" said Ms. Barson. "Every week at the Chardon Farmers Market I would buy something new. I liked knowing where they came from, where they were made."

Products may have fragrance or not. Ms. Willman currently is working to develop shampoo and conditioner bars. These are gaining popularity because they don't use plastic bottles, which are eventually added to the waste stream.



**Kerry Willman holds a hand-crafted bar of soap, just one of the many skin care products she sells online and throughout Chardon. Other products include lip balms, facial scrubs, natural bug repellent pet shampoo and more.**

Ms. Willman, who said that she feels as though she should have been born 100 years earlier, likes starting as close to the beginning

of a product's origin so she can control quality. For example, she recently planted rose bushes to make her own rosewater. That way she could be certain it wasn't from chemically treated flowers.

Soaps can be found at G.A.R. Horizons' farm store in Hambden Township, Salty and Taproot Yoga in Chardon and Starfish Coffee in Painesville. They also can be purchased online at [whfarmchardon.com](http://whfarmchardon.com). ■

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South Newbury Union Chapel Trustees Carole Drabek, Bill Ward and Sandy Woolf hold photos of the 1858 building where suffragists met to fight for voting rights. The structure still stands near Bell Street and Route 44 in Newbury Township and there are occasionally community meetings there today, in addition to tours in the summer months.



Photo by Michael Steinberg

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# 100 years of women's voting rights

Celebrations throughout Geauga acknowledge the 19th Amendment

By JULIE HULLETT

When it comes to the women's suffrage movement, Geauga County is full of history. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. Although many women who fought for the amendment did not live to see its ratification, they left a legacy. History lives on through the next generations, especially in the coming months as Chardon prepares to celebrate the 100th year of women's voting rights.

## South Newbury Union Chapel

Carole Drabek of Newbury is one of three trustees of the South Newbury Union Chapel, a historic site in the suffrage movement. The chapel, built in 1858, came forth to ensure free speech. Ms. Drabek said that in 1857, Congregationalists refused to allow future President James Garfield to speak at their church because they were afraid that his topic of discussion would be too controversial. At the time, President Garfield was a 26-year-old teacher at the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute, now Hiram College.

"The man who invited him (resident Anson Matthews) owned that land where the chapel now sits," Ms. Drabek said of the property near Bell Street and Route 44. "He was so incensed that Garfield was treated rudely that he donated the land for a community building for South Newbury."

Mr. Anson donated the land in 1857 for a new "house, public hall or meeting house... to be used for literary, scientific, moral and religious purposes, for lectures upon all useful subjects, open and free for all denominations, but to be monopolized by no one or more to the exclusion of anyone," according to its deed.

Ms. Drabek said that various social movements were launched from the South Newbury

Union Chapel, including women's suffrage. In 1871, nine women at the chapel became Ohio's first female voters. Their ballots, however, were "lost" en route to the Geauga Board of Elections.

**"Their votes were never counted, but they did go to the chapel," she said. "It was used as a polling location."**

Also, a two-day convention on human equality was held at the chapel in 1873, Ms. Drabek said. The following year, the second-oldest Women's Political Suffrage Club was founded. According to local legend, voting rights activists Lucy Stone, Louisa May Alcott, Theodore Parker and John B. Gough may have spoken at the chapel.

## KSU studies suffrage and fashion

Perhaps one of the most important events

that took place in the South Newbury Union Chapel was the founding of the Northern Ohio Health and Dress Reform Group in 1870. These local women believed that corsets, bustles and sweeping skirts were unhealthy and unnatural, according to Ms. Drabek.

**"The dress reform group started [at the chapel] and they were talking about the danger of their clothing," she said. "Women were wearing hoops, big skirts, which were a danger around fire. Women felt like they were in danger."**

On June 17 of this year, Kent State University professor Molly Sergi will present a talk

**Continued on page 16**



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## Continued from page 15

on, "Threads of Equality" at the KSU Geauga campus at 14111 Claridon Troy Road in Burton. Dr. Sergi will discuss how fashion has limited women's role in society and defined areas of submissiveness and restricted behavior. She will explain how women's emancipation was tied to clothing and style. The lecture will begin at 6 p.m. in the atrium and adjourn to the gallery at 7 p.m. for guests to see a display of vintage clothing and artifacts provided by the Burton Century Village and the KSU Fashion Museum.

## Gauga Lyric Theater events

The Geauga Lyric Theater Guild will host a documentary and a play to educate the public on the suffrage movement. The award-winning 2004 documentary "Iron Jawed Angels" features dramatic events of the suffrage movement on the east coast and in Washington, D.C., Ms. Drabek said. The film is recommended for a mature audience age 14 and older. The film will be shown on Oct. 15 at 7 p.m. at the theater guild, 101 Water St. in Chardon.

The guild will also present a one act play, "Votes for Women!" by Gyda Arber that is based on the true story of the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, which launched the women's suffrage movement. The play will take place at the theater guild on Sept. 17 at 7 p.m.

## More ways to celebrate

On May 27, the Western Reserve Historical Society will give a presentation called "Battle for the Ballot: Cleveland's Suffragette Movement" to discuss the band of women who dedicated themselves to the suffrage movement and the events that took place at the union chapel. It will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the Burton Public Library, 14588 W. Park St.



**March to the Centennial Oak Saturday, August 23, 1919 by the Newbury Women's Suffrage Political Club.**

"These old structures need to have people interested in them or they don't survive," Ms. Drabek said.

Chief Naturalist of the Geauga Park District John Kolar will also give a presentation of the chapel's history on Aug. 23 at 1 p.m. at the West Woods Nature Center, 9465 Kinsman Road, Russell Township.

The chapel will be open for tours on April 5, May 3, June 7, July 5 and Aug. 2 from 1-4 p.m. Ms. Drabek said that it has been awarded an Ohio Historic Marker, is recognized on the National Historic Register and is on the National Suffrage Trail. She added that there is no heat, electricity or running water nor is there an entrance for people with disabilities.

"The intent was to provide an educational forum," Ms. Drabek said. "The hope is that people will walk away once they learn more about it with a better and greater appreciation of not just the suffrage movement and what it

meant for women voting, but a reflection of their own life."

A garden party is scheduled for May 1 from 5-8 p.m. at the Chardon Square Historic District to profile impactful women in a garden-themed celebration. Also, the "Ladies Friend" shop will display vintage women's clothing from the late 19th to early 20th century at the Geauga County Historical Society museum grounds, 1653 E. Park St. in Burton.

**"These were strong women with a passion who created a voice for themselves in a world where women had no rights," Ms. Drabek said. "It's important to appreciate those connections to our past."** ■



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# Chamber honors Ward Lawrence with legacy award

Less than a year after 22-year-old Ward Lawrence graduated from Hiram College with a degree in economics, he and his father bought the Case Hall Insurance Agency in Chardon. They built the business – now Western Reserve Agency – into the longest-running business on Chardon Square. Sixty-two years later Mr. Lawrence continues to sell property and casualty insurance from the same location at 149 Main St., just above The Nest retail.

That same year, 1958, he married his high school sweetheart, Joan Rowland, and moved to Chardon. They raised a daughter and a son in Chardon and got deeply involved in the community. In fact, in 2019, he received the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce's Legacy Award for his lifetime of achievement in the community.

**Among those achievements is starting the Chardon Rotary Club in 1965. Today, he boasts 54 years of perfect attendance and is the remaining Charter member. He is also a member of the Chardon Square Association and, as a lay person, has been part of the Geauga County Bar Association Grievance Committee for 25 years.**

The Lawrences have been active members of Pilgrim Christian Church, on the southeast



corner of Chardon Square, for the last 60 years, filling various volunteer leadership roles.

Mr. Lawrence is a big fan of the small city because of its people and charm. "While the agency was in its present location when we purchased it, we stayed for many reasons including the historical charm," he said. "When I look out my window, I have the same view over the park as it was 62 years ago. I love Main Street.

"We have known many wonderful people who make my career truly a pleasure." ■



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# 7 ladies and 30 teas



## Parlor inspired by past generations

By DAVY VARGO

A blue house sits under bluer sky. Walk past snow, by the 7 Ladies Tea Parlor sign, and step onto the porch of the 180-year-old house. Now open the red door. Stroll in and read “Welcome” in big letters on the wall. Turn the corner, and there it is: a parlor adorned with lace curtains, tables, chairs, teacups and saucers.

Here, Jeanne Osborne-Felberg points to seven photos on the wall. Her two great-grandmothers, two grandmothers, mother and mother-in-law are the six women who inspired her, the seventh, to open her new tea room near Chardon Square. In late 2019, the Chardon resident opened 7 Ladies Tea Parlor. For 30 years, the former general manager of Jekyll’s Kitchen in Chagrin Falls worked in the restaurant business, opening 21 other food spots. The pastry chef converted the century

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Jeanne Osborne-Felberg recently opened the 7 Ladies Tea Parlor near Chardon Square. She offers more than 30 varieties of teas in the century home.



home back to the Victorian style after a previous owner had modernized the tea room.

At the parlor, Ms. Osborne-Felberg hopes guests feel at home and remember the good old days with their family. "There's all kinds of little touches when you walk into the tea room that should remind you of somewhere

you've been – your great-grandmother, your aunt, your cousins, somewhere," she said as music box tunes played in the background. Her goal is to "invoke that homey, comfortable feeling."

From her beloved relatives, Ms. Osborne-Felberg learned hospitality, "food equals

love" and the "power of a hand-written note." This morning, she baked goodies and prepared a "high tea" with three layers of sandwiches and sweets. A scone with Devonshire cream and jam rests on the platter, along with chocolate-covered strawberries and other

**Continued on page 20**

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## Continued from page 19

pastries. Fruit adorns the top tier to “cleanse your palate,” Ms. Osborne-Felberg explained. She bustled about filling small boxes for a customer who ordered tea for home.

“We always have the signature tea sandwich, which is going to be a cucumber sandwich,” Ms. Osborne-Felberg said in her hostess voice. “In addition, we always have four desserts that we’re going to tempt you with, either for the cream tea or the high tea.” While nibbling on delicacies like the lemon strawberry curd tart, patrons can taste one of the 30 to 35 teas, teas with names like Oo-

mango-long, Paris or Lavender Chamomile.

Ms. Osborne-Felberg’s own favorites are the house-blend tea and black current tea. “It’s nice and light,” she says about the house-blend tea with notes of orange peel and spice. “It goes with a lot of things – it complements the fruit and things very well. Pretty exciting. It’s great hot or iced.”

French-press coffee also is served. Really, she loves coffee best.

Vegetarian and gluten-free options are available, too. On this day, Ms. Osborne-Felberg is serving gluten-free and vegan minestrone soup. Family recipes grace the menu. She fancies her grandma’s chicken salad and

that pot pie from her great-grandma’s recipe box, all fond memories.

Men like the tea room, too. Hearty, substantial options like lasagna, instead of “bird food,” says Ms. Osborne-Felberg, appeal to the gentlemen. “It really does make for a great afternoon with your husband,” she said, adding that about seven men visited the day prior. A mixture of ages walk in and many who work on the square get lunch at the tea room.

Ms. Osborne-Felberg calls the women from her church “super supportive,” and one of them, Pat Martin, recently enjoyed raspberry tea at the Parlor. Mrs. Martin, owner of Antiques on the Square, helped Ms. Osborne-Felberg decorate. Mrs. Martin’s husband had pictures of ladies in what they call yard long prints, which perfectly match the wall-paper border. Mrs. Martin’s husband died, so when she dines at the tea room, she looks at the pictures and thinks of him.

Ms. Osborne-Felberg sells tea and tea cups. Soap, candles and jewelry from vendors upstairs provide shopping opportunities for customers. Outdoor seating, perhaps a deck, might be the next step. The business is nice and steady. She loves to be busy.

Upstairs, a private room for book clubs or Bible studies boasts of soft purple and rose themes – purple candles, napkins folded like roses and china in the moss-rose pattern. Ms. Osborne-Felberg’s own rose-printed shirt blends with what she calls the Audrey Rose Room. “When I started in this room, there was nothing but white walls and a bare floor,” she said, glorying in the tea room’s progress in three short months.

Here, Ms. Osborne-Felberg describes her seven relations, using one or two words that come to mind when she thinks of the ladies. For her great-grandma Ruth: beautiful parlor. Her great-grandma Victoria: happy grandma. Her grandma Sophie: poppyseed. Her grandma Irene: secret garden. Her mom Diane: supportive. Her mother-in-law Sandy: best friend. And herself? Happy and excited.

Reminiscing over memories of her grandmother and grandfather and their “secret garden” of a home, Ms. Osborne-Felberg described gardening with her grandma, blueberry-picking with her grandpa, pie-making and playing in a tree fort her grandpa built. The 17-acre Chardon house was “just a very amazing, just exciting place to go.” Her grandma delighted in entertaining.

She explained how her other grandmother Sophie baked poppyseed rolls. The tiny Polish woman rolled a glob of dough out as “big as the dining room table.” Ms. Osborne-Felberg’s voice floated up as she descended the stairs, “It’s the most amazing thing you ever saw – one of those things you think about when you’re a kid.

“One of the cool things about having a tea room is that it’s like having a party at your house every day,” she said. ■



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The Good News  
14905 North State Avenue  
Middlefield, Ohio 44062  
440-632-0130

Publisher: H. Kenneth Douthitt III

General Counsel/The Good News General Manager: Toni Richmond

Creative Director/General Manager: Amanda Petkiewicz

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The Artisans' Corner Gallery – owned by Chuck, not pictured, and Barbara Gates, is home to a bolstering collection of artwork and décor from local and regional artists across Ohio. The Newbury Township shop also features custom framing by Gallery Coordinator Monica Glasscock, below to the left.

Photos by Michael Johnson

# More than crafts



Artisans' gallery provides a sense of community

By SAMANTHA COTTRILL

From the outside, the Artisans' Corner Gallery appears unassuming, nestled within the Newbury Center Plaza between neighboring shops and eateries. Inside, however, the gallery is chock full of handcrafted treasures and paintings in 3,500 square feet of pottery, textiles, paintings and more.

Upon stepping through the entrance of the Kinsman and Auburn roads establishment in Newbury Township, visitors are met with a bolstering selection of artistic décor and ac-



cessories from local and regional artists. The gallery stretches back with shelves and tabletops full of fine jewelry, handmade ceramics and rustic gadgets among many other things.

"You can always tell when people have never been in before, because usually the first word out of their mouths is 'wow,'" Gallery Coordinator Monica Glasscock said. "They don't expect it to be such a large gallery."

Having its official grand opening on Sept. 2, 2016, the gallery has offered a quality selection of artwork for almost four years. While the shop is young, its growth has been strong, having already featured more than 100 artists.

Chuck and Barbara Gates are the owners of the local gallery. The longtime Geauga County residents have lived in Russell Township for more than 50 years and will have been married for 63 come June 2020.

Mrs. Gates, 85, said starting the gallery was her husband's idea.

"And I don't know where he got it because he's not an artist," she said. "I think he just wanted to build something in Newbury to help Newbury."

"Her lovely husband lost his mind," Ms. Glasscock teased.

"She's right," Mrs. Gates laughed. "When he was going to decorate the room, I thought I better step in."

Though not present to defend himself at the time, Mrs. Gates explained that while he is no artist, Mr. Gates, 88, knows business, owning several businesses in the township, including the Lamplight Court Apartments just around the corner by the Newbury High School. She said that he runs the behind-the-scenes, or the "business part," of the gallery.

She added that she used to be very active in the gallery's daily workings, but has since stepped down for her health.

"I come play," she joked, noting that she helps with smaller projects in the gallery now and regularly attends events and workshops.

With the help of their son Jeff and daughter Patty, Ms. Glasscock said the Gates family built the gallery out from a dirt floor to what it is now.

"[They] all worked together in creating the cubicles and then the panels for the wall display art, and I happened around then," she said. "And then we just started finding artists (for the gallery)."

**Whether local or regional, the artwork featured at the gallery is all Ohio, including Northeast Ohio artists Jan Mettee, watercolor, Dean Chriss, photography, and Mary Ann Sediwy, acrylic painting, among many other local artists.**

"I think we have a really unique and diverse variety, and there's a lot of local talent," Ms.

**Continued on page 24**

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## Continued from page 23

Glasscock said.

Though the selection of artwork for sale is sizable, it is not all the gallery has to offer, including regular events and workshops and custom framing by Ms. Glasscock herself.

The gallery hosts weekly and monthly gatherings that create a hometown environment along with other workshops in between, hosted by some of the very artists featured in the shop.

"On Tuesdays, we have what we call 'Salon du Mardi,'" Ms. Glasscock said, explaining that it kicked off about two years ago with one of the shop's artists, Margaret Khairallah, who does paintings and printmaking through linoleum cutting.

Ms. Glasscock explained that Ms. Khairallah started coming in on Tuesdays to work on her painting and printmaking, which drew customers who would talk to her about her work and watch.

"Little by little, other artists started," Ms. Glasscock said. "Sometimes we have eight to 11 ladies that get together on Tuesdays and everybody just works on their own work. It's just a really nice social engagement."

The gallery also has what is called "First Friday" every month where two to three artists do art talks and demonstrations over wine and hors d'oeuvres for a free evening event on the first Friday of the month.

Starting back in December 2016, the First



Friday artists are featured on the front wall of the gallery for about a month, Ms. Glasscock said.

The First Fridays are not just for wine and hors d'oeuvres, Mrs. Gates said, noting the gallery also does its share of giving back through the events by featuring the artwork of local art students and artists with mental exceptionalities, as well as coordinating a benefit for their local National Alliance on Mental

Illness chapter, NAMI Geauga.

This year, the gallery coordinated "Art with HeART" for the February First Friday where the gallery auctioned off specially made heart-themed artwork, of which a portion of the proceeds went to support the local advocacy group.

"I'm really pleased we can do something to help them," Mrs. Gates said, explaining that mental illness is something that affects the



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Gates family as well as many people globally. "It affects so many people," she said, pointing out that mental illness comes in many forms from daily struggles with anxiety and depression, to severe cases of schizophrenia. "It's just a cause near and dear to our heart."

As for the custom framing, Mrs. Gates said Ms. Glasscock "does a wonderful job and it's a very important part of the gallery."

Ms. Glasscock is an award-winning framer, and she said she's been framing for about 35 years. "I'm very passionate about it, and I only do conservation stuff."

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"Items are sewn on," she said, explaining that items can be removed from the framing without damage. "Whether it's valuable monetarily or if it's sentimentally valuable, it's very important that it be framed properly so that items don't get ruined."

In her career, Ms. Glasscock said she had framed a Christening gown from the late 1800s in which every member of a family had been baptized. After framing the gown, she said, it was removed and reframed three additional times to be used again for Christening ceremonies.

"I'm slow, but I work really hard for the quality and the craftsmanship," she said. "I love it."

Above all, Mrs. Gates and Ms. Glasscock agree that the gallery is a place to build community.

"It's friendly, it's warm, it's welcoming,"



**The Artisans' Corner Gallery has featured more than 100 Ohio artists, including assembler Annie Becker and her upcycled robots, pictured from left, 50 Cent, All-American Man and Rusty, made of vintage tins and scrap metals.**

Ms. Glasscock said of the gallery. "I can't tell you how many times people have come in and run into somebody they hadn't seen in years. It's kind of unique that it brings the community together." ■

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# Final resting places

Former city manager takes time to visit tombs of U.S. presidents

By PARIS WOLFE

**W**hen former Chardon City Manager Dave Leiko and his wife Freddie were driving from Saint Louis to Chardon, he decided to leave the beaten path and detour four hours north to see President Herbert Hoover's grave in West Branch, Iowa.

Mrs. Leiko is accustomed to her husband's detours to see presidential gravesites. He has been "collecting" these visits in earnest for the past 15 years. With the 2018 passing of George W. Bush, he has 11 remaining burial sites to visit.

Currently, 39 United States presidents are deceased, leaving five among the living. In case you're wondering, the numbers don't add up to 45 because Grover Cleveland served non-consecutive terms as the 22nd and 24th president.

Visiting graves happened organically for

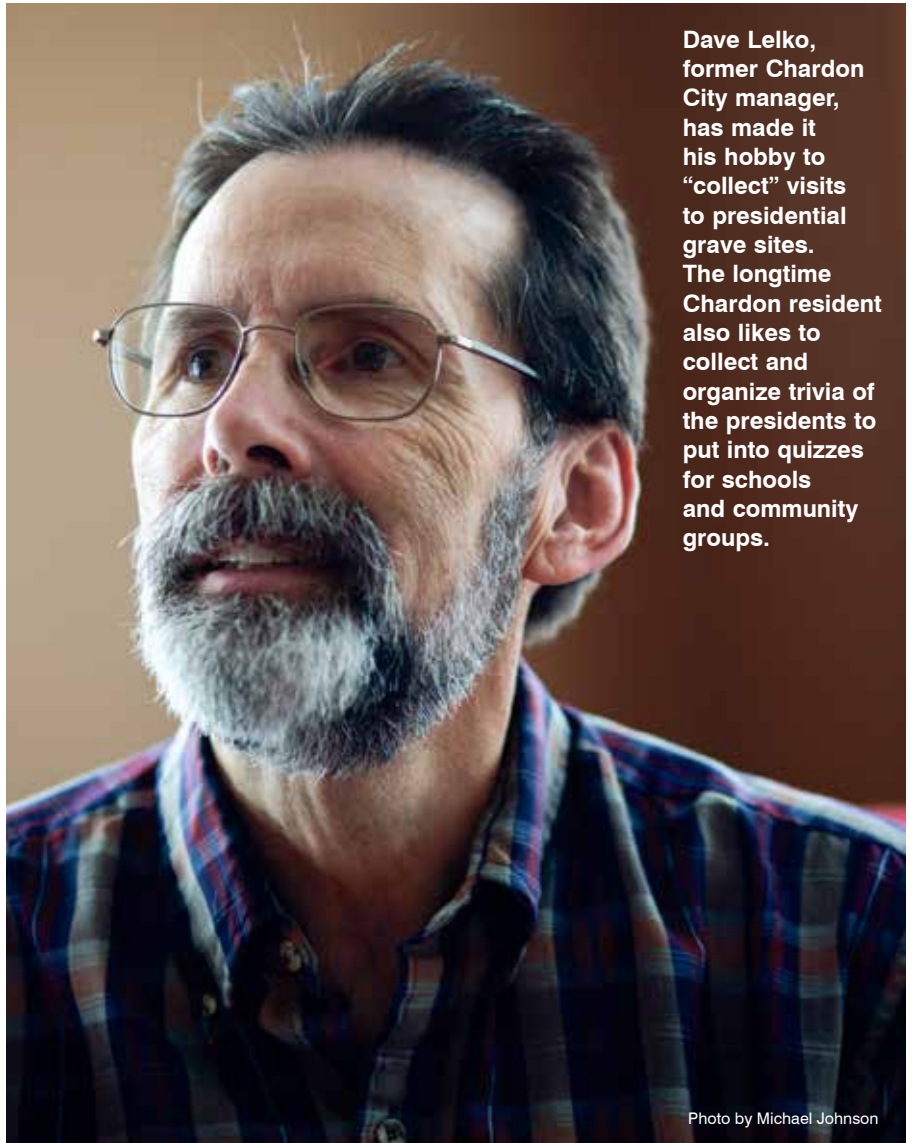


Photo by Michael Johnson

Dave Leiko, former Chardon City manager, has made it his hobby to "collect" visits to presidential grave sites. The longtime Chardon resident also likes to collect and organize trivia of the presidents to put into quizzes for schools and community groups.

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Mr. Lelko, a 30-year Chardon resident. "I went to a few nearby and thought it could be interesting to get to all of them," he said. "Any time we go on a trip, we pull out the list and see if there are sites nearby. We've taken some extended detours just to get to them.

"On a trip from Texas to Saint Louis, we stopped at Truman's and Eisenhower's" graves, he recalled. "I've also been to the LBJ ranch where he's buried in front of the ranch house," he said of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Historical Park in central Texas. He was the 36th president of the United States.

Interestingly, he pointed out that only one president is buried in Washington, D.C.; Woodrow Wilson is entombed at the Washington National Cathedral. Meanwhile, Virginia sets the record with seven burial sites.

Ohio ranks in the top three, with five deceased presidents in the state including William Henry Harrison, North Bend; Rutherford B. Hayes, Fremont; James A. Garfield, Cleveland; William McKinley, Canton and Warren G. Harding, Marion.

The closest to Chardon is the final resting place of Moreland Hills native James A. Garfield, the 20th president. His casket – the only presidential casket on view – rests in the lower level of the James A. Garfield Memorial at Lake View Cemetery. The cemetery with the castle-like memorial is at the edge of Cleveland's Little Italy neighborhood.

The most interesting final presidential resting place, to Mr. Lelko, is that of second president, John Adams, and his son, the sixth president, John Quincy Adams. Both Adams's and their spouses are entombed in a basement crypt of the United First Parish in Quincy, Mass. "They're behind a gate in a walk-in vault with low ceilings and dirt floor," he recalled.

The most disappointing grave, he said, was that of Grover Cleveland. President Cleveland's simple headstone is in Princeton Presbyterian cemetery in Princeton, New Jersey, just one block from the University campus. "It was unimpressive," Mr. Lelko said. "You'd never know there was a president in that cemetery."

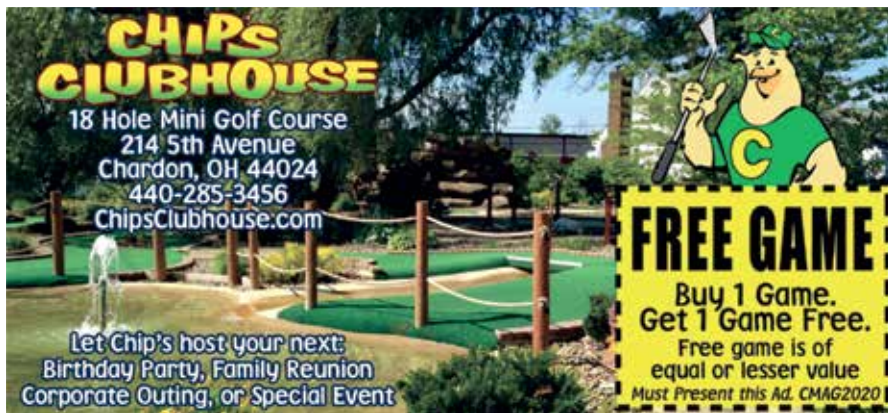
"Visiting gravesites may sound like a weird thing, but you learn a lot during visits," he said.

Mr. Lelko likes to learn about presidents. One of his lifelong hobbies is collecting and organizing presidential trivia. Today, he organizes that trivia into quizzes for school and community groups.

In February, for example, he presented one of his 45-question, trivia quizzes to the Chardon Area Chamber of Commerce.

"I've always had an interest in trying to make the presidents human instead of just a name on a piece of paper," he explained. "They're people, not just figureheads. They had real lives. I want people to get interested beyond a name in a book."

While he's seen and heard presidents speak, the only president he's met was George W. Bush during a political gathering at Christmastime in Washington, D.C. And, he has the photo to prove it. ■



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Photos by Michael Johnson

Heather Means, left, manager of Chardon's American Cancer Society Discovery Shop, helps customer Linda Gribble with items at the store in the Maple Leaf Plaza. The resale shop donates 80 percent of its proceeds to the American Cancer Society.

# They're working for greater good

## Volunteers at heart of cancer discovery shop

By **JULIE HULLETT**

**W**ith a new location and an army of volunteers, the American Cancer Society Discovery Shop in Chardon is booming with business. Manager Heather Means, the only paid staff member, said that it is not to her credit. She points to the volunteers for their endless commitment and dedication to the cause, often fueled by personal experiences with cancer.

"Many volunteers are cancer survivors," she said. "For them, the mission is personal."

There are many discovery shops throughout the country, which are resale shops that sell donated items to raise money for the American Cancer Society. There are six shops in Ohio, one of which is in Chardon. The shop was located on Cherry Avenue for 31 years but moved to 540 Water St. in the Maple Leaf plaza last year. Although the location change helped boost customer traffic, Ms. Means said that the volunteers are the heart of the operation.

"We would not be as successful as we are without the volunteers," Ms. Means, 49, of Chardon said.

The Chardon discovery shop sends back 80

percent of its proceeds to the American Cancer Society, making this location the No. 1 store in Ohio out of six, Ms. Means said. The funds raised are used to help cancer patients in Ohio. She mentioned a rideshare program that transports patients to and from their appointments. The shop also raises money for Hope Lodge in Cleveland, which offers cancer patients and their caregivers a free place to stay while getting treatment at local medical centers.

She explained that the parking situation at the location on Cherry Avenue was not ideal and there was no back door to drop off donations. The new location on Water Street was "move-in ready" and has more space and a back door for drop-offs. Even though it is a resale shop, there are cocktail dresses displayed on mannequins and dress shoes lining the back of the store. The store accepts clothes, accessories, books, household goods and much more.

Most of the volunteers are retired men and women and have a flexible schedule at the shop. They come in as often as they want to and view their time volunteering as a social hour rather than work. Ms. Means lets the volunteers do what they enjoy, such as working at the cash register, pricing items or taking donations behind the store. She said that the volunteers stay because the environment is laid back and fun.

In addition, the volunteers have a strong sense of community at the discovery shop.



Some are widows, some have battled cancer themselves and others lost a loved one to cancer. They bond over these shared experiences but gather to celebrate life. That includes Ms. Means, whose nephew died of cancer at age 28.

Ms. Means said that the volunteers meet up once a month at a restaurant to celebrate everyone's birthdays for that month, with sometimes 25 people in attendance.

"The volunteers will say it's their therapy," she said. "They are also good customers."

Joan Springer, 73, of Chardon has lost two family members to breast cancer. Eight years ago, her daughter died of breast cancer at the age of 42 and left her husband and three children. When Ms. Springer was 15 years old, her mother died of breast cancer. Similar experiences draw the volunteers together and keep them at the shop.

"Everyone has had cancer or knows of someone close to them. We share that amongst



**The American Cancer Society Discovery Shop has a vast array of gently used items, including racks of clothing, shoes, accessories, toys, books, household goods and trinkets.**

us," she said.

Holly Foecking of Concord has volunteered at the store on Saturdays since she had cancer in 2012. She said that she's from Chardon so she knew about the store. Ms. Foecking talks to people as they drop off donations, many

of which are from someone who just passed away, to console the family member.

"It's my way of giving back, promoting the cause and making sure that research can be funded," she said. "But the store does so much more than that, it helps people." ■



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# That salty ocean air



Photos by Michael Johnson

Candice Zinner, pictured above, co-owns the only salt cave and spa in Geauga County, Salty, with her husband Brandon, not pictured. The Chardon Square refuge features a collection of salt lamps, soaps and candles, among other things.

## Visitors can unwind with the help of halotherapy

By SAMANTHA COTTRILL

**L**ocated in the heart of Chardon, Salty offers refuge from the hustle and bustle of everyday life with weighted blankets, an infrared sauna, foot baths and, of course, a professionally created salt cave made of 23,446 pounds of salt imported from Poland.

Candice and Brandon Zinner of Chester Township are the proud owners of the only salt cave and spa in Geauga County and the only salt cave in the Cleveland area with a professionally made graduation tower, they said.

The salt, which comes from the Wieliczka Salt Mine of Poland, helps treat respiratory ailments, cleanse skin and reduce stress through halotherapy, an alternative form of treatment that involves breathing in salty air, Mrs. Zinner explained.

"With the manmade salt cave, there is a graduation tower, and it is a waterfall type effect with birch branches," she said. "And we have salt brine that runs over the birch branches. And as that hits each branch, it evaporates and mists into the air to make that microclimate air to breathe in. It's kind of described as like sitting at the ocean with the salty air."

Mrs. Zinner said that she first got into the idea of halotherapy when she started using it for her allergies as a natural alternative to allergy injections. She visited any salt booths she could find in the area and noticed improvements.

"I started researching more about it, then I took Brandon, and we kind of fell in love with the idea of having a place to come escape and relax and just to unwind from the everyday hustle and bustle."

Mrs. Zinner, 33, previously worked with the Geauga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, but now works full time at Salty. Mr. Zinner, 34, works as a full-time police officer and K-9 handler for the Willoughby City Police Department. He also is a veteran and member of the National Guard.

Mr. Zinner said that with his wife's previous work and allergies and the stress of being a cop and in the Army, halotherapy has helped them both.

"This was the perfect combination to just help people get out of their normal hustle and bustle, everyday routes and just relax or come get some relief from whatever ailments might be bugging them," he said.

Salty's cave builder is Beata Hatley of Salt Cave Pro Design, whose father was an engineer in the salt mines, the couple explained. "When she came to America from Poland, she

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**Continued on page 32**



Salt from the cave's graduation tower collects on birch branches as brine runs down in a waterfall effect before evaporating and misting into the air. Breathing the salty air, known as halo-therapy, acts as an alternative treatment to help treat minor ailments, according to the salt cave owners.

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## Continued from page 30

wanted to bring that part of her culture here,” Mr. Zinner said. “And so she started her business of building salt caves and running her own.”

By choosing Ms. Hatley’s company for their salt cave, the Zinners noted that their business stands out compared to other salt spas because of their cave design and their graduation tower.

“Other caves that we’ve been to, they use a halogenerator, which is a machine that grinds up a pharmaceutical-grade salt and disperses it into the air,” Mr. Zinner said. “That’s how they create their microclimate in the cave. Whereas we have our graduation tower, which is the salt brine that condenses, evaporates and creates a microclimate.”

Salt cave visits are 45-minute sessions and include a 12-pound weighted blanket and heated massage stones.

“We tried to create a spa atmosphere here to take it all in,” Mr. Zinner said.

“It really kind of puts people in that relaxation mode,” Mrs. Zinner agreed, noting that the cave has even turned skeptics into regulars. “We have current customers that are bringing someone new almost every time they come,” she continued. “Not only is it just for the salt, it’s the experience, the relaxation, the unplugging from your phone.”

While the salt cave may be the most popu-



lar attraction of Salty, the owners stressed that there is much more to their business, including a salt booth, infrared sauna, foot detox and a retail store.

The salt booth, essentially an “express halotherapy” session, grinds up the salt into a fine powder, Mrs. Zinner explained, to give a higher concentration or more individualized treatment.

“So for people with children, we recommend that,” she said. “It’s a quick 15 minutes, it has the chromotherapy light and that can help with your common cold symptoms, ear infections, psoriasis, eczema, asthma, inflammation in your respiratory system and allergy.”

Mrs. Zinner said their infrared sauna is mostly used for people who may have certain diagnoses for diseases or are in remission from cancer. It uses dry heat in 20- to 45-minute sessions to help visitors sweat out toxins or burn calories, she said.

Salty also offers foot baths, or foot detox, which pulls toxins out through the feet, changing the color of the water depending on what toxins were removed, Mrs. Zinner explained. “We also offer hot tea and water with honey,” she added.

At the entrance of the business, visitors can peruse a selection of retail items like salt lamps, soaps, candles, essential oils and

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cooking salts among other things.

While advertising the business has been a challenge initially, the owners agreed that word of mouth has really helped them grow through their first year and the overall experience of their services has been successful in bringing people back.

Looking forward, the Zinners are seeking ways to expand their services and offerings, including the recent hiring of a licensed massage therapist in mid-December.

"And then we love to collaborate with other businesses in the area, whether it's a yoga in the salt cave or meditation [event]," Mrs. Zinner said.

Mr. Zinner added that they like to give back when they can, offering free cave sessions for silent auctions and fundraising events for the community. "And being a veteran in business, we do discounts for military, first responders and senior citizens," he said, which is 10 percent off a regular-priced service.

They are also looking at implementing CBD in teas or products like lip balms or essential oil rollers.

"I just think it's important to get people a more natural way of living and relaxing," Mrs. Zinner said on why she feels their services are important. "People don't realize how stressed and go, go, go they are."

"It gives people the opportunity to de-stress and to bring themselves back to neutral," Mr. Zinner added. ■



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# All things fun

## Director goes beyond basics of recreational activities in Chardon

By DOUG TURRINGTON

**W**hen it comes to free time, everyone has their thing. Maybe it's watching movies or attending a concert. Maybe it's participating in a sport or physical activity. Maybe it's creating something from nothing. The good news for the residents of Chardon is that the Parks and Recreation Department, under the leadership of Adam Rogers, can help with all of the above.

Mr. Rogers spent more than 10 years in recreation before taking over as director of the city department in May of 2019. When stepping into the role, Mr. Rogers was not brought in to reinvent the wheel – the department was already doing well. Instead, his job was and is to optimize the offerings of the department.

"My first goal coming into [Chardon] was to observe what's already in place," Mr. Rogers said. "I wanted to see what they already did that was working, and maybe find some things that could use improvement."

Mr. Rogers did just that. His first day involved seeing how the city pool is filled, operated and maintained. Fast forward to autumn, and the department released its first recreation



Photo by Michael Steinberg

**Adam Rogers, the new director of Chardon's Parks and Recreation Department, has observed the department's successes but is looking for new ways to improve and expand their programming.**

magazine in years, boasting many new offerings.

"I think they used to do one a long time ago, but it's been a while," Mr. Rogers mused. "It has all the different programs – just in fall alone, we had 16 new programs."

Not all of the programs received the traction that the city had hoped, but part of that will be addressed this year with a new marketing strategy, he said.

"[A] huge hurdle is people not knowing

what's available," Mr. Rogers said. "We're hoping that mailing this brochure out to them will at least let them see that there's something new to take a look at."

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Chardon has all the basics that you would expect – soccer, swimming, summer camps, basketball and other popular sports and physical activities. Youth soccer and the swim team usually are neck and neck for the most popular programs. According to Mr. Rogers, the swim team in particular has come a long way, thanks to coach Matt Parrish.

“We weren’t competing well against the other bigger teams when we first started out,” Mr. Rogers said. “Now, they’re competing, they’re winning. It’s awesome.”

One of the other main obstacles with a new program, aside from awareness, is finding a venue for the activity, Mr. Rogers said.

“Whether it’s indoor gym usage, or outdoor multipurpose fields, space has been the biggest challenge,” Mr. Rogers said. “The school’s been great with letting us rent facility time, but they’re limited as well. They have all their own sports going on throughout the year.

“They’re trying to squeeze us in too, but they’ve been awesome at doing it. We’ve had a good relationship with them. So that’s been a great help for our department.”

The school isn’t the only valuable partnership, though. Cultivating partnerships is a core part of Mr. Roger’s philosophy, so Geauga County, Chardon Tomorrow and Chardon Square Association are some of the other groups chipping in.

“Without all these different partnerships and us helping each other out, a lot of this wouldn’t be possible,” Mr. Rogers said. “One

of the main things that I’ve been trying to do is just make as many partnerships and bring the community together, to work together to serve the residents. And so far, it’s been working out great.”

Venue isn’t always an issue, either. The department provides activities like fishing, archery and other programs that aren’t as dependent on a set place, or as difficult to secure. With the partnerships that Mr. Rogers is cultivating, there are more avenues for finding other necessities for a program, like quality instructors.

Reaching out to local hobbyists, experts and businesses has helped that process.

“That’s one of the first places I look,” Mr. Rogers said. “If you have a business that specializes in something that’s local, partner with them, use their resources, use their instructors use their knowledge, and incorporate it into a recreation event.”

Aside from the sports side of things, the department also hosts other events, like movie nights and concerts in the park.

Movies in the Park already has “Frozen 2” set to start the season on June 13, with “The Incredibles 2” and “Star Wars: Rise of the Skywalker” set for July and August, respectively.

Seasonally, they have events like a night where families can get together to build gingerbread houses with their fellow Chardonians.

And the events aren’t limited to what the department dreams up, either.

**“If somebody has a program idea that we’re not currently offering – yoga on the square, some kind of boot camp or something like that – they can always come to me and pitch their idea,” Mr. Rogers said. “Nine times out of 10, we will offer it and most of the time it will be successful because it’s new.”**

As the department looks ahead, there are two major projects that will get a lot of their focus this year.

The first is the expansion of Mel Harder Park, which will net the city another multipurpose field and some additional walking paths. The second will be to further expand the bike path. They are roughly slated to be completed by 2021, but nothing is official yet.

In the meantime, Mr. Rogers will keep working towards making the department better each day.

“Once those are done, it’s my job to keep looking for ways to expand our parks, expand our offerings,” Mr. Rogers said. “We always want to keep improving.” ■

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# Looking polished



Photos by Michael Johnson  
**Rae Greaves opened Polished about a year ago marking the first anniversary of the nail salon in Chardon on May 3.**

## Chardon native opens nail boutique in prime spot on historic square

By JULIE HULLETT

**R**ae Greaves and her new nail salon fit right into their cozy spot on the square in Chardon, but this is not the plan that she always had. Describing herself as “the kid in high school who said she would leave this area,” Ms. Greaves, 32, found herself opening a business in the heart of her hometown.

“It was a total whim,” she said of opening her own high-end nail business, Polished Salon & Boutique, which will have its one-year anniversary on May 3.

Polished, which uses Aveda products, offers services for men and women, including a manicure, pedicure, polish change, nail art, haircut, waxing and facial. The impressive nail art designs include a beach sunset, an American flag and more. Ms. Greaves selected the name of the salon based on how she

wants clients will look.

**“I named it Polished because I wanted one word that describes everything that we do, polished nails and polished hair,” she said. “I think that’s what sets us apart.”**

According to Ms. Greaves, the salon’s prime location on the square, 111 South St., is also beneficial. She said that her clients are regulars and the other employees are also building their own clientele. The youngest client is a 17-year-old student at Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin and the oldest clients are two 95-year-old women.

Ms. Greaves has been a licensed cosmetologist for five years but said that she did not want to go back to a corporate salon or work for another small business owner. She worked as an independent contractor for four years and worked in Chardon for three of those years. She said that she already had clientele and knew the status of her finances. After



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**Polished is located in the heart of the city on Chardon Square.**

many people suggested that she open a salon, she signed the lease in March.

"I wasn't a huge believer in 'things will happen when it's meant to be,'" she said. "I believe that now. Everything just fell into place."

Ms. Greaves said that the space needed significant renovations before the salon could open, including adding support beams, redoing the floors, picking the right color combinations for paint, flooring and furniture and ordering pedicure chairs. Family members helped with the renovation for six weeks and she hired a commercial contractor for the electricity and plumbing updates.

Ms. Greaves said that she believes her

life has come full circle because her father, John Greaves, worked at Framefinders on the square when she was growing up. Her grandparents moved to Chardon in the 1950s and her father moved there in his early 20s. Her mother, Bernie Greaves, is also a Chardon High School alumna and her nephews are enrolled there now. Mr. Greaves also worked as the librarian at Chardon Middle School.

"We have a lot of roots here," she said.

Ms. Greaves continues to be an active member of her community through her involvement in Chardon Tomorrow, a community development organization. She explained that when she was a child, the square was thriving. But in high school, after Walmart opened nearby, the square died down and there was not much activity or commerce.

"When Chardon Tomorrow started making sure people knew about the square, it brought Chardon back to where it was," she said. "It's a small town and they're super involved. They're making it into a thriving city again."

Ms. Greaves is planning Chardon Tomorrow's First Fridays event on Oct. 2 called History and Hauntings. She said that the community can go on a haunted history tour of the square and Chardon Tomorrow will partner with organizations to promote organ donation.

"Growing up here and having very involved parents, it was really important to me to give back," she said. "This is where I live and work. You have to put work into a community to get back what you want from it."

During the Geauga County Maple Festival from April 23-26, Polished will be open for walk-in services. They are also planning a one-year anniversary celebration in May. Ms. Greaves promotes special offers and deals on their Facebook page, Polished Salon and Boutique, LLC, and updates the website, polishedchardon.com. ■

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# To the rescue

## Company 119 is now Geauga's largest digital marketing company

By **DAVY VARGO**

**S**omebody asked the 22-year-old to make a website. He said sure. In his basement, he started designing websites. He thought it would just be a nice side business. The extra income might help his wife stay home with their baby, he figured. Yet now, about 16 years later, Christian Klein relies on Company 119 as his sole business.

When he was about 14 years old, Christian met Nate Winne, who was about 8. Both were homeschooled. Eventually, Mr. Klein bought an IT company in Chardon and got his buddy Nate to run it. Today, Mr. Klein is 37 and Mr. Winne is 31. They're still friends and now partners in their digital marketing business, Company 119.

At Company 119, Mr. Klein and Mr. Winne

want to help their clients effectively market their products or services in digital areas. From designing websites to building apps for their clients, to even writing emails, they work on capturing the right audience so sales increase.

Burrowed in a low, tan-colored building in Chardon, Company 119's red color theme pops – red walls, red doors, even a red fire hydrant. Mr. Klein, a volunteer firefighter, pointed out a photo hanging on the wall of the company's board room. In it, his dad crouches at the top of a tall fire ladder. One of the company's core philosophies, Mr. Klein explained, is to run toward fire, not away from it. When a client gets alarmed, frantic over how to navigate sales digitally, Company 119 rushes in to save them. The company's previous street address was 119.

Company 119's owners take pleasure in their finished Geauga Park District website. Mr. Winne described the "useable design" of the site that helps families easily pick fun activities, without, as Mr. Klein piped in, "friction points" to slow them down. In sales, first decide how many clients you want, Mr. Klein expounded, then go back to figure out the

number of prospective clients. Then pick the best keywords that'll get the right amount of website visitors. Keep in mind the end, he said.

Mr. Klein and Mr. Winne adapt to all the new technologies as they come. Video, for example, appeals to consumers because it's easy and quick compared to reading.

An animated Mr. Klein described one video project where he got to combine his passion for firefighting with his passion for marketing. An international fire gear company in Medina, Fire-Dex, sent them to New Jersey to film firefighters using their new equipment. "We went on the fire boat there, and we went by the USS New Jersey," Mr. Kline remembered. The "fun, interactive" project suited Mr. Klein because rather than filming someone in a chair touting the benefits of the product, they got to be around the guys "doin' the hard work." If other fire departments elsewhere saw the equipment in action, Mr. Klein said they might decide, "Oh OK, those kind of guys are using the gear that I know would work for me."

Exscape Designs owner Bill Dysert engages Company 119 to continually analyze how people digitally view and respond to his

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**Nate Winne, left, and Christian Klein rescue businesses with their own business, Company 119, currently Geauga County's largest digital marketing firm.**

landscape design business in Russell Township. To Mr. Dysert, websites need updating every three to five years, and he said working with Mr. Klein and Mr. Winne was very personal. Mr. Dysert described them as a partner in business who helped his firm make connections in the community. From the old website to the new, Mr. Dysert likened it to going from a 1989 Toyota Camry to an updated GMC.

Though website design used to monopolize the firm's attention, now other sectors absorb more time. "We're doing more custom web applications – we're doing a lot more video production," Mr. Winne said. "So again, as the landscape kind of evolves, we're starting to dip our toes into those things. We've got an awesome programming team that's putting together really creative applications."

Snow plow truck drivers in Geauga County employ an app created by Company 119. Mr. Winne said, "We're helping [the county engineer's office] so that they can send trucks out on the road and manage their teams and figure out which truck should handle a certain section of roads to plow and which one's supposed to go and handle salting for some other place." To avoid the previous hassle of an hour of phone calls to all the drivers, now the foreman simply types the announcement and deploys the trucks promptly. "It's an annoying sound that goes off on their nightstand, but they're coming in, and they're able to get the roads clear faster now by using that technology," Mr. Klein explained.

Legacy Village acquired a new website courtesy of Company 119. Mr. Winne said he couldn't quite remember what it looked like before. "You really have to break away from what that site looks like, you try to put it out of your head because you want to come up with something totally different that makes more sense than maybe what they had before."

For a very small client business, Company 119 has a cost-efficient option (around \$3,000) for a brand-new website.

Fireman jackets hang in the company's

rooms and a firefighting photo covers one wall while a Bible verse graces another. Both Mr. Klein and Mr. Winne attend non-denominational churches, and they said that their faith dictates their business practices.

"Our first core value here is we treat our community, our employees, our clients the way that we'd want to be treated," Mr. Klein said. This even means feeding their employees snacks and lunch. They want their 16 employees to go home at sensible times and not work weekends. Mr. Klein said, "Let's work hard, and then go home and be with your family, spend time with them – this is not what life is all about here."

Looking across the board room table, decked with red packages of Nutter Butter cookies, Mr. Klein shared how the company fired clients who mistreated their employees three different times. Was it worth it? Certainly, Mr. Klein said. They managed to replace the income they lost in 60 days. It'd still be worth it, he said, even if they hadn't recovered the income. A "pure joy," Mr. Klein calls his employee team (three of whom are his siblings). He introduced some of the employees and highly praising their work.

Mr. Winne used to design and Mr. Klein used to code. But now, Mr. Winne said they have hired better and better designers and coders. So the partners take more directive roles. Mr. Winne takes more of the creative strain, while Mr. Klein, the CEO, guides the big ideas for the company. Their world-views meld nicely, they said, and Mr. Klein's schemes are brought to completion by Mr. Winne's diligence.

"Nate gets everything done, and I just get in the way," Mr. Klein said. "I come up with the ideas that, like, throw everybody off all the time, and Nate's like, 'All right, well here's what we can actually do.'" He chuckled.

Gauga County's largest digital marketing firm, Company 119 has won a multitude of awards, including, Mr. Klein said, a fastest growing business award more than once. As far as ideas for the future, they plan to establish a new brand that would help companies use social media to find blue-collar workers.

There's one thing Mr. Klein finds amusing about his homeschool background.

"The people they said can't socialize are now [being paid] to socialize," he concluded. ■

# Rebuilding

## Owners optimistic as auto shop rises from the ashes

By DAVY VARGO

A vacation is just what we need, Tony and Amy Perrino decided as they sat on the couch and scrolled through potential destinations. Hectic months called for a nice break, they resolved. Mr. Perrino's phone rang a few times, but it was 11 p.m., too late for anything important, they concluded. But after 10 calls, Mr. Perrino picked up.

"The shop's on fire," Mrs. Perrino recalled her husband blurting out.

He rushed to the shop. She scrambled to turn on the news. He weaved his way through the firefighters. She felt like it was a movie, someone else's life.

Mrs. Perrino's voice trembled as she remembered the smell of their burning auto body shop, Action CARSTAR in Chardon. In September of 2018, flames scorched the body shop after Mr. Perrino, 36, and Mrs. Perrino, 38, bought it and an adjacent mechanic

shop, Chardon Square Auto and Tire, months before. "You could smell it from half a mile down," she said. "Twelve fire departments responded to the call. I mean they were everywhere."

Firemen drilled holes in the garage doors to test the conditions when they arrived, but that abetted the fire. Between two layers of roof the fire was trapped. "It almost acted like its own chimney because of how it was built, so it was just the air trapped up in there and the smoke and the fire, and it just kind of worked its way through," Mr. Perrino explained. The cause of the fire was labeled "electrical undetermined."

The firefighters left around 6 a.m., but Mr. Perrino still sat looking up at his shop, staring at the remains. Then he started sweeping. Rubbish from the fire blew into the next-door parking lot, and so he swept.

Horrible as the fire was, the struggles following greatly harassed the Perrinos. Fighting to gain insurance money, and hating to econo-

mize their employees' livelihoods, the Perrinos took a hard hit. Keeping their employees "safe and sound" is a "stress that you go to bed with at night – that's the pressure you feel," Mrs. Perrino said. But they managed to keep their employees.

Right when the Willoughby Hills residents started to personalize the shop, the fire struck. Operating at about 30 percent of their pre-fire customer base, their body shop in Euclid has absorbed some of the burnt shop's collision work. In the short time before the fire, the couple saw a 30 percent growth in business each month. "Taking care of the customer and taking care of your team are probably the two most important things you can do," Mr. Perrino said.

**Mrs. Perrino said they desire to improve the perception of the auto repair industry. "It is really all about doing what we would do for our family – that's for every customer, for every vehicle," she said. "We want to make sure that you're safe and that you're happy."**

Now, a rubber smell floats through the recently renovated waiting room in their nearby mechanic shop. The modern-styled area offers customers coffee, magazines and not news but food TV, as Mrs. Perrino said. "This is where I would want to be," she said.

More car trouble happens in "any inclement weather, so rain, snow, wind, you know, and then sun, too," Mr. Perrino said with a snicker. "Usually the winter brings in bigger accidents, but not necessarily more." As far as fixing cars with advanced technology goes, Mr. Perrino said, "I think it's what's going to separate people, or us, in the future is having the equipment to do it and the training to do it."

Technology, like detectors, can help drivers, but Mr. Perrino explained his theory on the very complicated new technology: "So you would think when they came out with bumper back-up sensors, or cameras for backing up, you'd think that there'd be a lot less bumper crashes. Well, actually, I think it makes people less aware of what's around them and they just rely solely on that." Mrs. Perrino said, "I mean I just backed into the garage. It didn't stop me from doing that." Mr. Perrino said people



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Tony and Amy Perrino stand outside the three walls of their new auto body business. After a fire destroyed the old building, the Perrinos said they look forward to opening the new shop.

think, “Well I can be on my phone texting because [if] somebody’s in front of me, this thing’s going to stop.” But he said, “They’re not always going to stop. They’re not always going to see stuff fast enough.”

Dave Linn, a longtime customer and Chardon resident, said he’s happy with the work the Perrino shop did on his vehicle. Well-acquainted with fire and devastation, the former firefighter medic is glad to see the shop picking back up. Next time he wrecks his car, Mr. Linn said, he plans to go to the Perrinos.

Three walls of the new building are up. The new shop will be bigger, complete with the latest equipment, when it opens in winter. There’ll be robotic drying lamps in the paint space and drive-in estimating. An optimistic Mrs. Perrino said she’s “hopeful for the future” in the “strong community” and Mr. Perrino concurred with, “We like the area – the town itself attracted us here because of the feel of it.”

The eager couple can now put a solid stamp on the business, exactly how they want it.

Still, they haven’t taken that vacation. ■

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