



The Barberton Herald



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Thursday, November 8, 2018

www.barbertonherald.com

Police investigating death in crash

Rich Muller
Herald Staff Writer

A crash on Norton Avenue near Coventry Road turned out to be more than just two vehicles involved with injuries.

An officer happened upon the crash and went to assist a man in one of the vehicles, a Nissan. The officer first thought the driver was unconscious from the crash, then discovered the man was dead from what appeared to

be a self-inflicted gunshot to the head.

Officers had been checking the area around Hiram for the Nissan, which was being driven by a man involved in a domestic argument call. The driver had left before police arrived.

A few minutes before the crash a passing motorist told police of a vehicle "flying around at a high rate of speed." Witnesses said the Nissan was on High Street (See CRASH, Page 2)



HERALD PHOTO/Rich Muller
Cars are examined by a Barberton officer after a crash on Norton Avenue.

Barberton's Vietnam veterans remembered



HERALD PHOTO/Rich Muller

During a 2015 ceremony, George Oklesh, Ron Stanich and Gary Magno of the Barberton High School Class of 1965 place a memorial stone at the Ohio Veterans' Memorial Park in Clinton to honor classmates who served in the military during the Vietnam War.

Karla Tipton
Herald Staff Writer

More than 3,000 military service members from Ohio lost their lives in the Vietnam War. Many thousands more served from cities and towns across America. Barberton contributed its share of service members, most drafted or enlisted between 1964 and 1973, as the

United States increased its direct involvement in the war.

Take the Barberton High School class of 1965. Of the approximately 550 students, 80 went into the military, said Bob Adkins, class reunion coordinator. In conjunction with the annual reunion, Adkins started a new tradition -- a ceremony (See VETS, Page 2)

McKenney in, Soyars out

Norton City Schools Issue 3 passes

Bethany McKenney will replace Michael Soyars representing District 7 of Summit County Council. Republican McKenney gathered 11,468 votes to Democrat Soyars' 9,814.

"It was a hard fought election," McKenney said. "I'm relieved that the board of elections signs saying I had withdrawn were not an issue."

Norton will say goodbye to a property tax and

hello to an income tax. Issue 3, a half percent tax on earned income in Norton is the new source for school district funding. The issue also reduces the current 1.9 mill property tax levy to zero. Norton Schools Superintendent Dana Addis said the goal now is to be humble in success and continue to be sensible and frugal with public money.

Citizens address Tobacco 21

Cierra Thompson
Herald Staff Writer

There were five citizens who addressed council during the committee of the whole meeting.

Tobacco 21 was a big topic mentioned by four of the five citizens during the Nov. 5 meeting. Michael Wellendorf, spokesman for Akron Children's Hospital, voiced his concern about the ways tobacco impacts young people.

"Tobacco use continues to be a significant negative public health factor across communities throughout the state of Ohio," said Wellendorf.

He reported, on average, smokers die 10 years earlier compared to non-smokers. He said postponing the legal age to purchase tobacco would place more barriers to the access points which would reduce early initiation.

Wendy Hyde representing the Tobacco Addiction Foundation (See CITIZENS, Page 2)

Easy Street Band plays on memories at The Tangier

Karla Tipton
Herald Staff Writer

One common denominator for Barberton and Norton kids of the 1970s was the sound of the Easy Street Band rockin' out at their high school gymnasium. Now, some 40 years later, those same kids are grown up with their own families, and for two nights every year, some of them take the opportunity to rock out to the band again.

The annual Easy Street Band reunion shows took place Nov. 3-4 at the usual venue, The Tangier in Akron. Par for the course, both shows were sold out. By the end of the second night's four-hour set, there wasn't a dry eye in the house, as the members of multiple generations from the audience joined the band onstage for an encore (See BAND, Page 2)



HERALD PHOTO/Karla Tipton

The Easy Street Band, known to multiple generations in Northeastern Ohio, reunites annually for two nights in November at The Tangier.

Wolf Creek Players 'Leaving Iowa'

Jim Eritano
Herald Staff Writer

The Wolf Creek Players open their 14th season with "Leaving Iowa," directed by Joe Kernan, Nov. 15-17.

Written by Tim Clue and Spike Manton, "Leaving Iowa" is a comedy toast to the idealism and character of the greatest generation, and a bit of a roast of their undying dedication to the classic family road trip.

The story is about a middle-aged writer named Don Browning who sets out to take his father's ashes to his childhood home, only to find that Grandma's house is now a grocery store.

Don sets off across Iowa in search of a proper resting (See IOWA, Page 2)



COURTESY PHOTO

Left to right, Donna Longfellow (Mom), Emily Conrad (Sis), Bradley Haramis (Don) and Eric Hutchings (Dad) in the Wolf Creek Players cast of "Leaving Iowa."

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Turf installation begins



HERALD PHOTO/Rich Muller

Throwing the first shovels of dirt are school, city and community supporters of the turf committee, left to right: Olan Koehler, Elizabeth Mayreis, Tom Harden, William Judge, Rudy Sharkey, Michael Soyars, Bethany McKenney, Mike Eberhart, Dave Polacek, Megann Eberhart, Brian Canale, Ric Wiley, Rob Culbertson, Shawna Angeloff and Lisa Devenport.

A ceremonial ground breaking is conducted the morning after the final Magics football game of the season, signifying the beginning of the installation process of artificial turf at Barberton's Sharkey Stadium.

The project is expected to be complete and ready for the 2019 football season.

A live feed of the ground breaking ceremony can be seen on the Herald's Facebook page.

Band

(Continued from Front Page)

of Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes' "Having a Party."

The band kicked off the first set under its original moniker, the Rats, with vocalist "Westside" Steve Simmons leading the band in songs by Bruce Springsteen, Ian Hunter and even the Sensational Alex Harvey Band—familiar acts to the radio-listening audience of '70s Ohio.

The members of this iteration of the band are native to Barberton and Norton, and include Simmons and Gary Krizo on vocals, Bob Martin on bass, Bob Wallace on drums, and Robin Harris on guitar. Filling in for original guitarist Bones Bonam, missing in action for health reasons, was Rick Usko, "who is also from the 4-4-2-0-3," said Simmons, as he introduced the newest member. Usko, a formidable lead player, fits into the band as if there from the beginning, and performed impressive solos on songs such as Lynyrd Skynyrd's "Free Bird" and Lou Reed's "Sweet Jane," among others. Usko also played in the post-Rats iterations of the line-up, sitting in on 12-string guitar for a moving version of the Eagles' "Take it to the Limit."

The huge sound of the Easy Street Band is easily explained by the double digit numbers of band members, shuffling on and off the stage as one song melted into another, representing the versions of the band as it evolved over the years.

Other members of the various Easy Street eras were Russ Hagler on guitar, vocals, keyboards and bass; John Casey on guitar, Tim Longfellow on keyboards, and drummers Ronnie Gillard and Criss Markulis. The horn section was David Bowe on trombone, Jim

Pica on trumpet, Andy Henkel on saxophone, and Tyler Pica on baritone sax. Kearston Kopf contributed the female side of several duets with Simmons, including Meatloaf's "Paradise by the Dashboard Light," which also featured guest "radio announcer," Jody Yankovich.

The band performed many of its own songs, which over the years have been committed to both vinyl and CD. Simmons' vocals are still strong on such catchy originals as "She Don't Love Me" and "She's Got Your Name," which might have been hits, if the breaks had been right. The latter was included on the soundtrack for the 2015-2016 ABC primetime TV show, "Wicked City."

As always, the jewel in the crown of the evening was Springsteen's "Jungle Land." This epic song about life on the streets of New York, with its multiple changes in tempo and wall of sound horn section, cannot be pulled off by just any band, but the Easy Street Band succeeds easily. Simmons has the charisma and vocal range to do the song justice, and pours feeling into the searing lyrics.

When a band is that good, it can pull the threads of teenage memory and evoke feelings of optimism that come naturally in youth, that arise from the music that made you dance and smile. It all comes bubbling back. That the Easy Street Band has been pulling those threads for four decades is more than special. It's priceless.

Crash

(Continued from Front Page)

and ran a stop sign on Norton Avenue at a high rate of speed. It then crashed into the driver's side of a Ford, spinning both around. Two people in the Ford were taken to the hospital.

The accident remains under investigation.

FROM THE FRONT

Iowa

(Continued from Front Page)

place for his father, and the father-and-son road trip shifts smoothly from the present to Don's memories of the torturous annual vacations of his childhood.

"Leaving Iowa" is a postcard to anyone who has found himself or herself driving alone on a road, revisiting fond memories of his or her youth.

Tickets are all general admission, and available online at www.wolfcreek-players.org or by calling 330-825-3814. They will also be available at the door the day of the show.

Tickets are \$13 for the 7:30 p.m. show Thursday, Nov. 15 and the 2 p.m. Saturday matinee Nov. 17, and \$15 for the 7:30 p.m. shows Friday Nov. 16 and Saturday, Nov. 17.

Doors open one hour before curtain time.

Vets

(Continued from Front Page)

for veterans held at the Ohio Veterans' Memorial Park in Clinton.

The inspiration for the commemorative event was Adkin's friend and classmate, Ebenezer Harris, one of the city's most decorated Vietnam veterans.

Harris was drafted in 1969 and served in the United States infantry. During his two tours in Vietnam, he earned the National Defense Service Medal; the Vietnam Service Medal with one silver service star, representing five campaigns; the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal; an Army Commendation Medal, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, presented by the Republic of Vietnam.

When Harris returned to his hometown in 1975, his time to serve was not yet finished. He joined the Ohio National Guard and spent the next 21 years at the Barberton Armory on Norton Avenue, serving in the Bravo Company, 107th Armored Cavalry. Harris retired in 1996, and now resides in Tennessee. At the time of his retirement, he said, "I served my country, served my state, and

I always obeyed the rules and regulations."

Adkins recalls the humility of his classmate, "Ebo," also called "Sugar Bear" by his fellow servicemen. "He's a hero, but nobody knows it." He took over the controls and safely landed a damaged helicopter under enemy fire. Although not trained as a pilot, he saved the lives of fellow servicemen. "He never once bragged about it," said Adkins. "He deserves appreciation."

Recognizing that all veterans deserve appreciation, Adkins organized the commemorative ceremony at Memorial Park, first held in 2015, and twice more in recent years. For that first ceremony, "I called every veteran in our class that I knew of and invited them," he said.

They were all heroes, he said. When the Vietnam War ended, and they came home, "they were spit on and it was ugly," said Adkins. "They deserved better than they got."

At the ceremony, "We had them speak on what they did after 1965. There were guys who talked and cried, and said how much they appreciated that day, because we welcomed them home. They had never gotten that before," said Adkins. "Everybody just started hugging veterans. It was very emotional."

Citizen

(Continued from Front Page)

spoke about the effectiveness of the tobacco policy and how it works. Hyde explained how they allow local municipality to raise the legal age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21 which will restrict the social norm about access to the products. She then went on to explain how younger generations are marketed toward when it comes to the new ways tobacco is being ingested. She presented a small vaping device and explained how they have become a dangerous trend among teens.

"There's been the driving force in the tobacco industry to change their product and what we are now seeing has impacted youth at epidemic levels," Hyde said.

Other citizens who addressed council about the bill included Michael Hughes, practicing cardiologist at Barberton Hospital, and Tim Lewis with the American Heart Association.

The Tobacco 21 speakers all expressed their support

for the bill. Hughes even touched on how younger people who are exposed to addictive substances will have more complications because their brains are still developing.

Lewis said the mission is to be a relentless force for a world of people living healthier, longer lives. Lewis said the leading cause of death is cardiovascular disease and smoking only increases the risk.

"The most preventable risk factor for cardiovascular disease is still tobacco use," said Lewis.

Following that, Evan Delahanty, founder of Peaceful Fruits, introduced himself, told his story and presented everyone with some of his snacks. He expressed how happy he is to open the business in Barberton.

Mayor William Judge closed with an update. He told council he has had meetings with some developers and will have more information about them as details unfold. As holiday season nears, Judge encouraged people to volunteer for BACM and the Salvation Army.

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