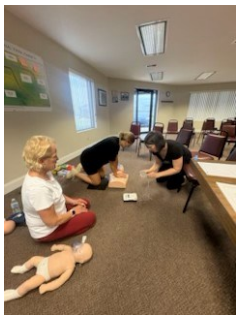
***MCDO MISSION STATEMENT***

*The Marion Community Development Organization (MCDO) is an organization under the laws of the State of Ohio, not-for-profit. The mission of the organization shall be to act as a coordinating body to assist local organizations meet the changing needs of the Marion Community through planned development while maintaining its agricultural profile. The activities will be directed toward, but not limited to, development of infrastructure, housing, family care, education, small business, recreation, and agriculture.*

## President's Message—Ted Bertke

Jean Bender has decided to retire as MCDO Treasurer after 25 years of service to the organization. Wes Everman will be the new MCDO Treasurer. We thank Jean for her many years of service and wish her the best! We welcome Wes to the board!

In May, the MCDO had our first CPR classes-free for all members! A huge thank you for Julie Schulze for leading the training and helping teach this vital skill! We're proud to empower our community with life-saving techniques that make a real difference.





## Marion Local Schools—Mike Pohlman

It was an outstanding 2025-2026 school year in which our students achieved at a high level in the classroom and provided our community with great entertainment in their extra-curricular activities. I would like to congratulate all of our students for their successes throughout the year. Congratulations to all of our sixty-four graduates who participated in commencement ceremonies on May 17th. John Mescher was named valedictorian and Hannah Rindler and Chloe Bergman were named co-salutatorian. Of the sixty-four graduates fourteen received Honors Diplomas and twenty-one received the President's Award for Academic Excellence. We are very proud of our graduates and their accomplishments and thank all of the donors that sponsored scholarships to help these individuals further their education.

The original deadline for the new facility was July 17th. Due to some unforeseen things, the completion date is being pushed back to the end of July/early August. Construction crews continue to work on finishes such as installing paper towel holders, toilet partitions, furniture installation, painting, kitchen equipment hook up, hanging doors, and final cleaning. Asphalt will be starting on July 17th and will hopefully be completed by July 27th. This will cause some disruption with parking and navigating through our campus during this time. Areas will be blocked off and we thank you for your patience. With the project deadline being pushed back, we still do not have a date set for an open house. We will be sure to communicate with our community the date(s) when everyone can see the finished work that started with a group of community members casting a vision for our school. It will likely be mid August.



## *301 Club—Doug Bender*

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club would like to thank everyone who has renewed their memberships for 2026. We would also like to welcome the new members that are joining us. It is because of all of our members that we are able to help support so many different youth summer programs and assist the local parks with additional funds. If you have not received a renewal form in the mail or would like to become a member, please contact Doug Bender through email at mcdo301.group@gmail.com, by phone at 419-252-0763, or contact any of the other committee members Luke Bertke, Alex Moeller, Aaron Timmerman, Danny Liette, Kyle Mescher, Greg Wolters & Dustin Seitz.

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club donated over **$13,000** to the following youth summer programs and local parks; Marion Little League, Youth Softball, Youth Soccer Program, Pony League Baseball, Acme, Jr. Acme, Youth (boys and girls) Basketball, Chickasaw Parks, Marion Township Park, and Osgood Park. Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible!

The summer youth sports programs are back underway for the 2026 season. We would like to thank all of the volunteers who help coach and assist these programs.

Our annual chicken dinner fundraiser was held on Sunday, July 12th. Thank you to all who purchased tickets or volunteered to help make the fundraiser a success!

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club is a non-profit group that has been actively supporting Marion youth programs and our local parks since 1996. Our goal is to help sustain active programs and the development of our parks. We are able to accomplish this through membership fees, donations, & our annual chicken dinner sales. Our community and children benefit from your generosity. Go Flyers!

## *The Retreat House: Spiritual Centers—Steve Pulskamp*

**RETREAT CENTER NEWS**

Our first annual outdoor Christkindlmarkt is almost here! Inspired by traditional European 'Christ Child' markets, our Christmas Market will be held on the grounds of the Maria Stein Retreat Center, with support from the Shrine of the Holy Relics.

The staff has been very busy over the past 5 months in preparation for the two-day event on December 11 and 12. Over 20 traditional wooden huts have been built for vendors to display their gift items and food creations. Plan to join us for a selection of traditional German food and drinks, a vendor market offering unique items for sale, the Candy Land café, a children's train ride through the woods, a chance for kids to visit with Santa Claus, a silent auction supporting ongoing outreach to youth retreats, and a FREE Christmas concert by Nashville artists Caleb + Kelsey!

**FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS**

Over the past two and a half years, our dedicated maintenance team has renovated all 74 guest rooms! Their efforts have transformed each room into a cozy, welcoming space for every guest. The scope of the project has been extensive! Below is a list of everything removed and replaced over the years:

13,000 square feet of flooring

3,700 linear feet of trim molding

185 Gallons of paint

370 light switches and cover plates

148 light fixtures

74 new toilets, vanities, faucets, grab bars, towel bars, desks and chairs, window blinds, and desk lamps.

**WHAT'S COMING UP**

Here are a few events happening in the coming months:

- Healing Masses will be held on September 8, October 13, and November 10. Mass begins at 7:00 pm in the Chapel "at the Lake" in Montezuma.
- Fatima USA will be held on Friday, August 14, at 7:30 pm at the Maria Stein Retreat Center. This year's 'Meet the Priest' will be Fr. Ethan Moore, parochial vicar at the Holy Cross Family of Parishes.
- Christkindlmarkt outdoor winter festival will be held December 11 and 12.

## Maria Stein Shrine—Heidi Pierron

In a world that constantly pulls at us with work deadlines, children's sporting events, and endless household chores, it is comforting to know that the Maria Stein Shrine of the Holy Relics is a place of peace and prayer.

The Shrine offers a quiet place to simply **be**.

**Be** in the presence of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament. The Shrine offers Eucharistic Adoration every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from noon to 5:00 p.m. On the first Thursday of each month, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is extended until 8:00 p.m.

**Be** in the presence of the saints in the Relic Chapel. Whatever burden you carry, there is a saint ready to intercede for you. If you are struggling with addiction, ask for the intercession of Saint Maximilian Kolbe. If you want to pray for the protection of farmers, seek the prayers of Saint Isidore. Fathers striving to lead their families can turn to Saint Joseph, while mothers seeking strength and wisdom may ask the intercession of Saint Anne. With relics of more than 850 saints in the Relic Chapel, you are sure to find faithful companions who will pray with you and for you.

Whether you come for a few minutes or spend an afternoon in prayer, the Shrine is a place to step away from the noise of everyday life, encounter Christ, and find peace in the Communion of the Saints.

Until Labor Day, the Shrine is offering free guided tours of the Relic Chapel every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:00 a.m. Meet in the Gathering Space just inside the main entrance. Whether you are visiting for the first time or have been to the Shrine many times, these tours offer a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the saints, the relics, and the rich history of the Shrine. To learn more about the Shrine, visit: mariasteinshrine.org

Shrine Hours: Monday - Thursday: 9:30 am - 6:00 pm,

Friday & Saturday: 9:30 am - 4:00 pm,

Sunday: 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm

## Village of Chickasaw—Nick Thobe

**Clock**

- A grandfather clock was donated to the Village by Nick and Lori Schwieterman. This particular grandfather clock came out of the Farmers Bank of Chickasaw in 1936 and has been in the Schwieterman family since. Council gives a large thank you to the Schwieterman Family for sharing a part of their history with the community and council invites the community to view the clock placed on display at the Chickasaw VFW.

**Christmas Lights**

- Santa Claus is coming to town this winter with new Christmas lights lighting up the streets in Chickasaw. Through a very generous donation from the Elaine and Virgil Puthoff estate the Village has purchased new street lights including a Santa Clause Christmas light to be displayed at the Library beside the clock donated in their name. This is especially special as Virgil Puthoff would be seen playing Santa Claus for many throughout the community and it is through Virgil and Elaine's generosity that the lights were purchased.

**Parks**

- The Chickasaw Park Board has had another successful year with the community Picnic. Fun was had by all and the proceeds will again go into making the community parks fun and safe place to play. The hard work of the park board is greatly appreciated and the community at large thanks them for their time and dedication.
- Also the Chickasaw Picnic hosted a very fascinating and enjoyable presentation on the history of the Village and the Chickasaw Indians who first settled in the area. The Village gives a special thank you to Larry Eyink and Nick Thobe for keeping history alive and dedicating the time to gather the information. For those who were not able to attend several presentations are given through out the year at various events so be on the lookout.
- Along with the community picnic the Chickasaw Community Fire Department had another great day for their annual Fire Siren 5K run. They had a nice turn out of runners and people to cheer them on. The community gives thanks to the Volunteer Fire department for their successful race and for keeping the community safe.

**Businesses**

- Jean and Joe's Town Tavern has official changed hands and is now the Chickasaw Town Tavern. While it is currently being updated, the Village anxiously waits for the reopening under its new management. The Village and community at large are all appreciative for all the memories made at the Town Tavern and greatly appreciate all the hard work from Jean and Joe Puthoff over the years. We would like to wish them a very relaxing and enjoyable retirement, they've earned it.

## Marion Township Park—Lee Heitkamp

The Park Board of Marion Township Park meets monthly. We continue to focus on improving and maintaining the park for our community. At the time of this writing, the Park Board is wrapping up and celebrating another successful Country fest. We would like to thank all those who came out and supported the Waffle and Taco Boat stand.

The Park Board would also like to bring to attention of how wonderful it has been to see the use of the bike path. However, as the bike path has become busier, the Park Board has received an increase in concerns regarding its use. We kindly ask everyone to be respectful and courteous to others while enjoying the path.

It is time to push forward and to get ready for the annual Alumni tournament which will be held July 24, 25, and 26th. We have another great lineup of bands this year. With Ran over Fritz featuring Asher Urban will play Friday evening, Saturday: The Issac Buscher Trio, and Sunday: Kyle Koesters. We hope you all can come out. As 100% of the proceeds goes back to the park.

Also at the time of this writing, the Park Board is busy getting ready for the annual Soup Party appreciation dinner which will be held on Sept 27 on the park grounds. Be looking for more details in the mail and mark your calendars to come out and enjoy some delicious soup. Also happening at the park this fall; The Marion Soccer Committee is getting ready for soccer season for Marion Local grades 1-6. Be on the look out as all soccer players will be selling BBQ chicken and Pork dinners which will be distributed on Oct 11th.

As you might have all seen the Shelter house is on its way up. We are now taking reservations for your rental needs in 2027. Please contact Ryan Stucke for your rental needs -419-852-5088.

If you have suggestions for the park's future, we welcome those discussions. Current Park Board members include: Lee Heitkamp (President – 419-305-8238), Troy Luebke (project manager- 419-733-1675) Jeff Wolters (Treasurer – 419-953-0373), Diane Alexander (Social media/email coordinator – 419-733-5968), Ryan Stucke (Rentals – 419-852-5088), Greg Hartings (419-852-8177), Jodi Winner (419-953-3290), Secretary/Concession stand Brenda Hamberg (419-852-0292).

## Zahn Marion Township Library—Juli Berning

Our summer reading program ended on July 14th with a party at The Edge Sports Complex where we handed out prizes and had entertainment by comedy juggler Matt Jergens. The top two readers in grades one through five were announced at the party. They are first-grade – Gabe Redd with 1,520 points and Layla Albers and Sophia Albers both with 1,200 points; second grade – Louis Otte with 2,790 points and John Cron 2,120 points; third grade – Audrey Koesters with 3,560 points and Kenzie Moeder, 2,160 points; fourth-grade – Liv Wolters with 4,700 points and Chloe Luebke 3,190 points; fifth grade – Isaac Redd with 3,920 points and Madi Hess 3,620 points. The top readers each received an "Unearth a Story" t-shirt for their accomplishment. The program concluded with prizes, awards and certificates for all the summer reading participants. The library would like to thank the following businesses and organizations for supporting this year's summer programming: Armstrong Air & Space Museum, Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm, Bicycle Museum of America in New Bremen, Buschur's Custom Farm Service, Chickasaw Qwik Stop, Cincinnati Reds, Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, Cleveland Browns, Cleveland Cavaliers, COSI, Dayton Dragons Baseball, The Edge Sports Complex, Garst Museum, Huelsman Automotive, Innovative Office Solutions, Kings Island, Korner Kafe, Lock One Theatre, Mack Arena, Maria Stein Dairy Station, Mercer County Fair, Mercer Health, Minster K of C, Minton Veterinary Service, Inc., New Bremen Coffee Co., New Bremen Dairy Queen, Oletangy Caverns, Ohio State Fair, Ohio State Parks, Osgood Bank, S & K Products, Sauder Village, Science Central, Scott's Carryout-Maria Stein, Town Tavern, Winans Coffee & Chocolates and YMCA. Also a special thanks to the Chickasaw Fire Department for the fire truck rides and the Marion Township Trustees who let us put the scavenger hunt on the bike path again this year. We are so grateful to live in such a wonderful community!

Come and join us for these upcoming events:

- Book discussion group meets the first Tuesday of every month April thru October at 7 pm and November thru March at 6:30 pm. This group is very informal—come join us and meet fellow book lovers. Books are provided by the library.
- Story time every Thursday morning at 10:30 am. Children will have fun learning dances, songs and listening to stories.
- Family night is the second Tuesday of every month (with the exception of August) at 6:30 pm. Join us for crafts, stories, activities and a special treat. September 8th – theme to be determined. October 13th will be Halloween themed, children may dress in their Halloween costumes. November 10th will be Thanksgiving themed and December Santa will visit. A list of all dates is available at the library.
- Thursday, August 27th 11:30/12 noon – Lunch & Learn at the library. Kathy Hounshell with AAA will be here talking about fall prevention. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to the first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm (you do not need to eat lunch to come to the presentation). Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

## *Zahn Marion Township Library—Juli Berning (continued)*

Thursday, September 24th 11:30/12 noon – Lunch & Learn at the library. Speaker to be determined. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to the first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm (you do not need to eat lunch to come to the presentation). Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

Thursday, October 22nd 11:30/12 noon – Lunch & Learn at the library. Allison Eversman with Mercer Health Wellness and Medicare will be here. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to the first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm (you do not need to eat lunch to come to the presentation). Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

Lego night will be held on the third Thursday of every month from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Parental supervision required for younger children as some pieces are rather small.

DINOVEMBER is back! Stop in the library during business hours in November and pick up a Dino activity pack for your child; while you're there try our Dinosaur I Spy and get a prize and check out five books to get a chance to win a prize.

Stop in the library each month for our take and make crafts. Available while they last.

No pre-registration required for any of these events.

All dates, times and information on all of our upcoming programs are available on our Face Book page. Just go to www.facebook/ZahnMarionLibrary and "like" our page. Come into the library today and check us out!

**Join the MCDO for our Upcoming Women's Self Defense Class—Free for members!**

