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Loudonville Wins \$1.7 Million TAP Grant Funding

By Jim Brewer

Loudonville will receive a \$1.7 million Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grant, according to a news release issued Tuesday, August 18, by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

ODOT Director Pamela Boratyn announced more than \$21 million in grants for 17 bicycle and pedestrian safety projects in 16 Ohio counties.

The Loudonville project was described in the release as “a five-foot-wide on-street bike lane on Main Street from Spring Street east to Brentwood Drive.” The total project cost is \$1,784,450, according to the release.

The project requires a 20 percent local match.

“I couldn’t stop smiling after receiving word of the grant approval,” Mayor Cathy Lance said.

Lance said the bike lane is the central part of the project, but the work also will include several downtown improvements, including new sidewalks, improved crosswalk safety and improved lighting.

“We will have to figure out what all improvements will be made and develop a budget to help plan the project out,” Lance said. “We, including present and past council members, former Mayor Jason Van Sickle, Administrator Garret DeWitt, several village personnel and volunteers from the Mohican Area Growth Foundation, have been working on this application for four-and-one-half years. Needless to say, I am thrilled we finally have been approved.”

The Mohican Area Growth Foundation provided funds for engineering services and other work during the application process.

Lance said she will appoint a committee consisting of herself, DeWitt, at least one council member and one member of the Mohican Area Growth Foundation to begin planning the project.

According to ODOT, TAP provides funding for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transportation access, community improvements, recreational trails and safe routes to school.

Other nearby projects receiving TAP funding include \$398,880 in Holmes County for 1,720 feet of the Mohican Valley Bike Trail along Wally Road near Lost Horizon Campground; \$858,970 in Knox County for improvements along three highways in Gambier; \$552,220 to Fredericktown to complete an earlier TAP-funded streetscape project; and \$750,000 in Wayne County for a 1.25-mile shared-use path connecting Venture Boulevard and Silver Road.

County Commissioners Seek State Revitalization Funds

By Amanda Chambers

The Ashland County Commissioners authorized Ashland Area Economic Development to serve as the lead entity for an application for Fiscal Year 2027 Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program funding during their Thursday, August 20, meeting.

The commissioners also authorized Cameo Carey, director of Ashland Area Economic Development, to submit and file the grant application on behalf of Ashland County. Commissioner James Justice said the funding is available through a state program that has previously funded projects in other counties. Additional funds have become available for new applications.

In other business, commissioners approved a contract with Coldwell Banker Ward Real Estate to advertise property at 1740 Baney Road, Ashland, for lease.

The property includes approximately 3,600 square feet at the front of the county dog shelter building. Commissioners said the county had originally hoped to attract an animal-related business, such as a veterinary practice or animal supply store, but those efforts were unsuccessful. The county will now work with the real estate company to find a tenant.

Rental income would be used to help offset operating costs at the dog shelter.

The commissioners also approved several budget adjustments, including appropriations for anticipated expenses,

budget reductions to align spending with expected 2026 revenue and transfers for remaining-year expenses.

The board authorized the disposal of county equipment through GovDeals internet auction and approved routine financial matters for the Dog Shelter. Commissioners also approved a travel request.

The board’s meeting scheduled for Tuesday, August 25, was canceled due to a lack of agenda items.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for 9 a.m. Thursday, August 27, in the second-floor conference room of the Ashland County Building, 110 Cottage Street. Meetings are open to the public and streamed live on the “Ashland, OH County Government” Facebook page.

Police Calls

ASHLAND
August 12, 2:20 p.m. Police served a warrant at the Ashland County Jail to a 58-year-old man for contempt of court.

August 13, 8:08 a.m. Police responded to a report of a break-and-enter burglary at Wagon Wheel, 255 Orange St. A 29-year-old man was arrested for criminal trespass, disorderly conduct, and open container of liquor.

August 14, 10:00 a.m. Police conducted a traffic stop in the 1400 block of Troy Rd. A 40-year-old man was arrested for an open container of liquor in a motor vehicle.

August 14, 5:00 p.m. Police responded to a report of theft at Walmart, 1996 E. Main St. A 56-year-old was arrested for theft.

August 15, 8:03 a.m. Police responded to a report of a disturbance at BP Duchess, 153 E. Main St. A 42-year-old man was arrested for misuse of the 911 system, making false alarms and falsification.

August 17, 12:12 p.m. Police responded to a report of theft at Walmart, 1996 E. Main St. A 39-year-old woman was arrested for theft.

August 18, 8:00 p.m. Police responded to a report of trespassing/unwanted person in the 1100 block of Union St. A 55-year-old man was arrested for probation violation.

August 18, 10:11 p.m. Police responded to a report of trespassing/unwanted person at UH Samaritan Health Center, 1025 Center St. A 55-year-old man was arrested for disorderly conduct.

LOUDONVILLE
Aug. 9, 4:45 a.m. Police assisted Ashland County Sheriff’s deputies with a missing person report in the 1000 block of State Route 97. The individual was located by the Richland County Sheriff’s Office.

Aug. 10, 1:04 p.m. Police responded to the 600 block of S. Mt. Vernon Ave. on a trespassing complaint.

Aug. 11, 12:49 a.m. Police investigated a suspicious vehicle parked at a business in the 500 block of S. Market St. An individual was found sleeping inside and said he had become drowsy while driving home.

Aug. 11, 6:09 a.m. Police took a report of a single-vehicle crash in the 200 block of Middle Dr.

CALLS cont. to pg.3

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Residents Question Proposed Tourist Home Rules

By Jim Brewer

A dozen people, several of whom operate tourist homes in Loudonville, attended the August 17 Loudonville Village Council meeting to question proposed legislation requiring permits for the businesses.

Two issues drew particular attention: a proposed cap of 25 tourist homes and a \$150 annual permit fee per unit.

"I have no problem with reasonable regulations, but I feel limiting tourist homes to just 25 could have a negative impact on our economy," Sam Shrock said. "It would be better to let the market dictate how many tourist homes there are. If the market fails to fill them, they can be converted to long-term rentals."

The proposed cap was discussed several times. Councilman Brandon Biddinger suggested increasing it to 30, while Bill Huffman, chairman of the Planning and Zoning Committee that drafted the ordinance, suggested eliminating the cap and letting the market control the number.

Huffman said there are 22 tourist homes in the village. Realtor Tracy Kauffman, who assists tourist home owners, estimated there are 32, although some are inactive.

An attendee questioned the \$150 permit fee. "That amount is part of a larger effort for the village to increase charges for land-use permits, many of which were set in the 1970s," Huffman said.

Mayor Cathy Lance said complaints from the village's Board of Zoning Appeals helped prompt the proposed permit requirement. Council members had also heard objections from neighbors about tourist homes.

Safety is another concern. The proposed permit process includes an inspection by the fire chief or a designee. Huffman said owners who cannot attend may designate someone to represent the property during an inspection.

Under village zoning regulations, tourist homes are permitted in residential areas but not in areas zoned residential-commercial. Huffman said this technically excludes tourist homes in the downtown area.

"We waive this requirement, and all tourist homes in business now will not lose their status. They will have to obtain a permit," he said.

Law Director Thom Gilman compared the requirement to restaurant regulations, saying businesses must first meet zoning requirements and then obtain operating licenses or permits. Restaurant permits are issued in Ashland, while tourist home permits would be issued by Loudonville.

Huffman and Lance acknowledged residents for their input. "I am sure your input will affect the final form of this legislation," Lance said.

Monroe Street resident Tom Pearce questioned a proposal to take a section of East Washington Street out of service and add it to the Bill Harris Ford car lot.

"I don't think big trucks can make the turn off of Monroe Street to West Washington, and I question fire department access to the area," Pearce said.

Pearce and resident Todd Sprang also questioned how the proposal would affect a nearby alley. Gilman said the alley is not mentioned in the proposal.

Lance said she appreciated residents raising issues that had not been considered. Councilman Tom Young said he would like to hear from Bill Harris Ford representatives.

Pearce also asked that additional letters be sent to property owners in the area.

Village Administrator Garret DeWitt reported that asbestos removal is complete at the recently acquired Bustle Street property. The building should be demolished within the next few weeks to make room for a parking lot.

DeWitt also reported that the village has acquired its winter salt supply and that the pond near the swimming pool was chemically treated last week.

Gilman said one or two public hearings will be required to make zoning classifications along the Ohio 3 bypass uniform. Some properties are zoned C-2, general commercial, and others R-C, residential-commercial. All will become C-2.



Commander Jeff Marotta and First Vice Commander Don Riffel present a \$70,000 check from American Legion Post 257 to Mayor Cathy Lance during the August 17 village council meeting. The funds, from the Legion's Charitable Games account, will go toward construction of a new village police and office building.

Photo by Jim Brewer

Gilman said an Ohio Department of Transportation official told him ODOT is unlikely to reconsider its designation of 50 mph for Wooster Road. The official recommended a village traffic assessment to support the village's request to keep the posted speed limit at 35 mph.

The council unanimously approved an Architectural Review Board recommendation to extend the board's jurisdiction to the block where the proposed village police and office building will be constructed, allowing the board to review the building's design.

The next council meeting will be Tuesday, September 8, one day later than usual because of the Labor Day holiday. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in council chambers upstairs at 156 N. Water St. Meetings are open to the public.

CALLS cont. from pg.2

Aug. 11, 2:08 p.m. Police responded to a two-vehicle crash in the 3000 block of State Route 3. A 17-year-old Perrysville female was cited for failure to maintain an assured clear distance ahead.

Aug. 11, 2:38 p.m. Police investigated a report of people going door to door in the 200 block of N. Water St. The individuals were advised that soliciting is prohibited in the village.

Aug. 12, 5:53 a.m. Police investigated a possible theft from a wood sales cart in the 800 block of S. Market St. No theft was believed to have occurred.

Aug. 12, 10:11 p.m. Police investigated a report of threats in the 300 block of W. Campbell St. After speaking with the parties involved, officers determined no direct threats had been made to the caller.

Aug. 13, 5:10 p.m. Police investigated a report of theft of services in the 300

block of N. Jefferson St. The caller did not wish to pursue criminal charges but advised that the individual would be trespassing if he returned to the property.

Aug. 13, 6:11 p.m. Police and fire personnel responded to N. Union St. and E. Main St. for a report of spilled oil in the roadway. The Loudonville Maintenance Department was contacted to clean up the spill.

Aug. 14, 8:06 a.m. Police met with a caller at the police station regarding a harassment complaint. The investigation is ongoing.

Aug. 14, 8:17 p.m. Police investigated an incident involving juveniles at Riverside Park on S. Birch Dr.

Aug. 14, 10:06 p.m. Police responded to the 300 block of Baker Ct. regarding a juvenile complaint.

Aug. 14, 10:25 p.m. Police cited a 16-year-old Danville man for failure to obey traffic control devices near N. Market St. and Main St.

Aug. 15, 4:24 p.m. Police cited a 26-year-old Ashland

man for speeding, (48/35) on E. Main St. near Madison St.

Aug. 15, 5:07 p.m. Police responded to the 300 block of W. Main St. regarding a juvenile complaint.

Aug. 15, 7:15 p.m. Police responded to the 200 block of N. Union St. regarding a barking dog. The individual caring for the dog was given a warning.

Aug. 15, 7:58 p.m. Police assisted the Ashland County Sheriff's Office with a felony arrest warrant in the 100 block of E. Second St. in Perrysville.

Aug. 15, 9:41 p.m. Police responded to the 200 block of N. Spring St. regarding an individual with an active felony arrest warrant. The individual was located, arrested on an

Ashland County warrant and transported to the Ashland County Jail.

Between August 9 and August 15, police also handled 46 additional routine calls, including business checks, EMS assists and reports of suspicious activity that did not require further action.

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4 lb.	
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30 oz.	
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14 oz.	
Armour Chili with Beans	\$1.99
14 oz.	
Armour Chili No Beans	\$2.29
6 pk. asst.	
Act II Microwave Popcorn.....	\$3.49
5-6 oz. asst.	
Pam Spray	\$3.99
4 pk. asst.	
Dole Fruit Cups	\$3.49
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Crav'n Flavor Potato Crisps	2/\$3.00
6 oz.	
IGA Graham Cracker Pie Crust.....	\$1.99
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IGA Tea Bags.....	79¢
10 ct. asst.	
Folgers K-Cup Coffee	\$6.99
4 pk. White	
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Kraft Mac & Cheese.....	4/\$5.00
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Marie Callender's Cobbler	\$6.99
12-16 oz. asst. — <i>Digital coupon available</i>	
Dole Fruit	\$3.99
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Steak-umm Angus Steaks	\$9.99
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CARIBBEAN PORK AND
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Yield: 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 6 cups baby beet greens or mixed baby lettuce
- 3/4 pound cooked pork roast, thinly sliced
- 2 large ripe mangoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/2 pint grape tomatoes, sliced in half lengthwise
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 fresh coconut, thinly shaved
- 1/2 cup balsamic glaze

DIRECTIONS

Cover a large serving platter with greens.

Place roasted pork over the greens.

Top with mango slices, sliced tomatoes, walnuts and coconut chunks.

Drizzle balsamic glaze over the salad and serve.

To prepare fresh coconut

Step 1: Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Pierce a skewer through two of the three coconut eyes. (They're soft and easily punctured.)

Drain the coconut water.

Place coconut on a tray and bake for 20 minutes.

Step 2: Use a hammer to tap the middle of the coconut, turning slightly after each tap. Continue tapping until the coconut cracks open.

Step 3: Insert a butter knife between the flesh and shell to remove flesh. Use a vegetable peeler to slice the flesh for shaved coconut.



CHILLED QUINOA SALAD

Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 12 cups water
- 1 1/2 cups tri-colored quinoa, rinsed
- 1 European cucumber, peeled, ends trimmed, and cut into 1/4 inch cubes
- 1 large tomato, cored, seeded, and diced
- 1 bunch Italian parsley leaves, chopped
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3/4 teaspoons freshly ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS

Bring the water to a boil in a large saucepan. Then add the quinoa, stir once, and return to a boil. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 12 minutes. Strain and rinse with cold water in a sieve. Allow quinoa to dry then transfer to a large mixing bowl. Add the cucumbers, onion, tomato, parsley, olive oil, mayonnaise, salt and pepper. Combine well.

Photo and styling by Webstop

Please note that some ingredients and brands may not be available in every store.

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Coach Serrato Brings High Hopes to Redbirds XC

Staff Report

First-year coach Mike Serrato has lofty goals for the Loudonville girls and boys cross country teams.

“As a first-time head coach, I am excited to be able to teach a sport that I am extremely passionate about and love to do,” he said. “I look forward to being able to grow with them as both a coach and a runner, so that we can make this season as exciting and memorable as possible.”

After losing regional qualifiers Lettie Wenell and Nora Lance to graduation, the Redbirds look to the next generation of runners to find success.

Returning letter winners include senior Bailey Henry, junior Dorian Milgate, and sophomores Gracie Jefferies and Kristen Troyer.

“We are a small team with a large number of youth in the program. As such, my four returning letter winners will be key leaders and role models for all of my first-time runners,” Serrato said. “As veterans of the sport, they understand the work, the highs and lows, the consistency and the wins that cross country is all about and demands from a runner.”

“Being the team's only senior, Bailey (Henry) will also, in some ways, be the team's big sister. Her rejoining the team and becoming the mature role model is a responsibility that, while she may not have intended to take on when she asked me if she could come out for the season, is one that I believe she will be able to flourish in. I have very high hopes for her.”

Two runners Serrato said will also make an impact are Jefferies and freshman Patton Keener.

“Both have major goals of breaking out of districts and qualifying for regionals this season, and their hunger is something that I believe can fuel the rest of the team to become the best versions of themselves,” Serrato said.

While Serrato knows the youth of his team may have some disadvantages, he also recognizes it as a strength.

“Because we only have one senior, we have a unique opportunity this season to create groundwork that will be a baseline for future years as well,” he said. “I believe that we have serious potential that we can develop at both the junior high and high school level. I also think that we have a team that genuinely wants to learn and grow in the sport, which is very exciting to have as both a coach and an avid, lifelong runner myself.”

The Redbirds will face Knox Morrow Athletic Conference powers Mount Gilead, Fredericktown and East Knox, but Serrato said the team is up for the challenge.

“While we may be a small and youthful team, I firmly believe that we have kids who will be able to throw down and compete when it matters the most,” Serrato said. “I have very high expectations for us, and I think that this season has the potential to show the area that we are a program that should be respected and get future junior high and high school students excited about joining next year.”

Loudonville opens the season Monday, August 24, at Northmor.

Ashland Area Chorus Announces Start of New Season

Submitted

The Ashland Area Chorus will begin its 2026-27 season August 31 and is accepting new members.

The community-based mixed choir, which has 40-50 singers, will rehearse Mondays from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in Room 242 of Ashland University's Center for the Arts.

The chorus will perform at Ashland University's Fall Choral Concert on October 18 and participate in the annual Festival of Lights on December 13. It also is scheduled to perform with the Ashland Symphony Orchestra next spring.

The chorus is open to singers from Ashland County and surrounding communities. Previous choral experience is encouraged. There are no strict age limits, but singers younger than 18 must be approved by the director.

For more information, contact Ron Blackley, director of choral activities and a professor of music at Ashland University, at rblackle@ashland.edu or 419-289-5114.

Information email: rblackle@ashland.edu

Perrysville Council Fills Vacant Seat

By Amanda Chambers

Perrysville Village Council held a special meeting August 19 to appoint a new member to replace the late Councilman Bob Zakutni, who died in July.

The village received one letter of intent from Zakutni's wife, Ruth Zakutni. Council unanimously voted to appoint Ruth to the vacant council seat.

Zakutni was reelected to village council in November 2025, and his term was set to expire at the end of 2029.

Following the vote, council entered executive session to discuss letters of intent received to fill open positions on the Board of Public Affairs. No other business was conducted before the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular council meeting is scheduled for 6 p.m. September 14 at the Community Center. The meeting is one week later than usual because of the Labor Day holiday. All meetings are open to the public.



New Perrysville Village Council member Ruth Zakutni is sworn in by Council President Randall Stroh. Zakutni was appointed to fill the seat held by her late husband, Bob Zakutni. Photo by Amanda Chambers

Kettering Birthday Event Planned

Submitted

A 150th birthday event honoring Charles F. Kettering will be held Saturday, August 29, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Loudonville Fair Event Center, 165 N. Water St., Loudonville.

The open house will include trivia, games, refreshments and speakers. The program also will feature birthday toasts, appearances by Kettering scholarship winners, historical videos and messages from local officials and community organizations. A raffle also will be held.

The free event is sponsored by Loudonville/Perrysville Alumni and is open to the community.



Charles F. Kettering cuts a slice of birthday cake in Loudonville's Central Park during his 70th birthday celebration in 1946. Submitted Photo

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Log Cabin Days Returns September 11th and 12th

Press Release

Shorter days, cooler temperatures and sweet apple cider usher in the fall season, and with it, Log Cabin Days. Join in the family-friendly fun Friday, September 11, and Saturday, September 12, at 552 State Route 95, Loudonville, OH 44842. Proceeds from this event go to the American Cancer Society and Mohican Parochial School.

The Homesteading Tent is back for 2026 with an exciting lineup of speakers and vendors available to consult with on how to have your own hobby farm. The presenters include Bill Speer on Gardening Techniques; Hay Ride Forestry Tour with McKay Forest Products; Fermented Favorites by Karen Geiser of Karen’s Garden; Doug Fitch of Fitch Pharm Farm, who will cover Maple Syrup & Honey Production; and Anna Edgington, who will be doing Hay Ride Herb Identification tours. And don’t miss the keynote speaker, David Kline, covering Eating From the Land. For a complete schedule, please call 800-368-1015.

The two-day, family-oriented event has something for everyone and will also include demonstrations of lumberjack skills, ax throwing, wood chopping and crosscut sawing; 19th-century log cabin-related trades such as hand hewing, wood carving, furniture making, gun building, spinning and rug braiding, candle making and log cabin building.



Visitors enjoy a previous Log Cabin Days event. This year’s event is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 11, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturday, Sept. 12, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Submitted Photo

Many activities will encourage audience participation. There will be over 50 booth exhibits containing rustic home furnishings, builders, craftsmen and home material providers.

If you’re interested in building a new home, you will want to go on the self-drive log home tour. Tour up to eight beautiful log homes in the Loudonville area. Allow yourself all day to visit all of the homes on the tour. A \$25 per person donation goes to the American Cancer Society.

Taking place on Saturday at 4 p.m. is a Cabin & Pavilion auction. It includes three prebuilt cabins and two pavilions. The local school will be doing a benefit silent auction with furniture, crafts, Amish-cooked dinners, etc.

Children will enjoy Log Cabin Days as much as the adults, with the petting zoo giving them a chance to interact up close with animals like ponies, calves, puppies, rabbits and kittens. Or, they can play “gold-digger” and sift through wood shavings to find small trinkets and coins, or take a pony train ride. If that’s not enough, there are also relaxing covered wagon rides through the woods.

Always a popular destination is the food tent with an array of authentic old-fashioned, Amish-made food. Delicious barbecue chicken, noodles, potato salad, baked beans and a variety of pies will tempt the palate. There is also homemade ice cream, fry pies, fresh-squeezed apple cider, apple butter and kettle-cooked popcorn to further whet the appetite. And be sure to try out the Log Cabin Burger. No one should leave hungry! Early Bird Breakfast is served between 7-10 a.m. Saturday.

Mark your calendar now for this popular family event. Hours are Friday, Sept. 11, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. and Saturday, Sept. 12, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Cabin Auction Saturday at 4 p.m. Location is 552 SR 95, Loudonville, OH 44842.

For more information, call 800-368-1015.

JH Golf Ready for Strong Season

Staff Report

Third-year coach David Artrip has the Loudonville junior high golf team ready to not only gain experience but also succeed this fall.

“Last year we (saw) the program take a big step forward through an athletic group of then seventh-graders,” Artrip said. “With 21 golfers, we are able to move kids in and out as other events take them away from competition. Having that many golfers creates competition, which will make everyone better.”

The Redbirds went 7-2 last fall. Returning eighth-grade golfers are Elliott Merritt; Braxtyn Tuttle; Adrian Lee; Grayson Buirley; Grayson Wilson; Landon Stake; Liam Paterson; Cyla Goines and Colton Marotta.

“I expect all of the returning players to compete and contribute,” Artrip said. “They all are talented and have improved. Competition is good, and they all have the skill set to qualify for a match. Grayson Buirley, Cyla Goines, Spencer Buirley and Piper VanHorn play a unique role because they have the opportunity to inspire young girl golfers and help form the first girls golf team in high school.”

Seventh-graders are Grady Wilson; Maddox Fliger; Beckett Reidenbach; Jackson Stitzlein; Spencer Buirley; Piper VanHorn; Leiam Romine; Emmett Bacon; Zachary Burkhart; Axton Poier; Henry Bitner and Anson Stake.

“All the seventh-graders participated in summer golf programs,” Artrip said. “They obtained the foundations and basics of golf, so by the time we started junior high golf, they had previous experience.”

The Redbirds did send some talented athletes on to high school.

“Moving up to high school golf are Wyatt Artrip, Aiden Stone, Bentley Shearer and Matthew McClure. All four really changed how the junior high program looked,” Artrip said. “They were able to put the program in a position to not only be competitive but also stand out as a very difficult team for opponents to beat.”

While Loudonville sets its sights on another successful season, Artrip is also focused on his athletes getting as much experience as possible and carrying that into high school competition.

“They are very competitive. Being the athletes they are, they want to win,” Artrip said. “But they understand that it’s important to get out on many different courses and learn how to play them by making smart decisions, knowing when to be aggressive and when not.”

The Redbirds will continue competition on Monday, August 24, against Fredericktown at Pleasant Hill Golf Course.



The Loudonville Junior High girls golf team includes, from left, Grayson Buirley, Spencer Buirley, Piper VanHorn and Cyla Goines.

Submitted Photo



The Loudonville Junior High boys golf team includes, from left, Elliott Merritt, Grady Wilson, Colton Marotta, Anson Stake and Braxtyn Tuttle.

Submitted Photo

Arrows Sweep Season Openers

By Dan Chandler

The Ashland Arrows boys soccer team wasted no time making a statement to open the 2026 season, pounding Ontario 9-0 on the road Friday, August 14, before following up with a 2-1 win at Mansfield Senior on Tuesday, August 18.

Sophomore Luke Lavengood put on a show in his season debut, scoring four goals to lead a balanced Ashland attack that never let up against the Warriors.

Lavengood’s first two goals came off feeds from junior Jaxson Witter, and he closed out his big night with a pair of goals assisted by senior Gary George.

Junior Ethan Haag was nearly as productive, finishing with a hat trick of his own. His first goal came on an assist from freshman Coen Howman, who made his presence felt in his first varsity action.

Witter added a goal, and junior Mattox Mager rounded out the scoring for the Arrows.

The Arrows then earned their second win of the season against the Mansfield Senior Tygers. Ashland and Mansfield Senior were tied 1-1 at halftime after Lavengood struck again, converting a penalty kick for his fifth goal of the young season.

Ashland’s defense made the difference in the second half. George sealed the win, burying a free kick for what proved to be the game-winner.

Ashland returns to action August 25 at home against Dover. The Arrows travel to Brunswick on August 29.



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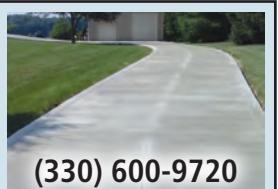
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Redbirds Open Season With Shutout

Staff Report

The Loudonville girls soccer team opened its season with an 8-0 win over St. Thomas Aquinas on Monday at McMullen Field.

Junior Brynn Bitner scored three times in less than eight minutes in the first half, with assists from juniors Laney Polen and Kate Frankford.

Polen added two goals, both assisted by Frankford. Frankford also scored, with an assist from sophomore Iva Spreng. The Redbirds (1-0-0) took a 6-0 lead into halftime.

Loudonville continued to score in the second half, with senior Rebekah Carroll scoring on a Bitner assist and senior Quinn Morris scoring on an assist from freshman Harper Willis.

Junior goalkeeper Amber Manchester recorded two saves to secure the shutout.

The Redbirds were scheduled to host Ridgewood on August 19 and travel to Hillsdale on August 22. Results were not available at press time.



Senior co-captain Quinn Morris rings the victory bell after the Redbirds shut out St. Thomas Aquinas in their girls soccer season opener on August 17.

Facebook Photo

This week, Loudonville hosts Mansfield Christian on August 25, plays at River Valley on August 29 and travels to Triway on August 31.

Ashland Tennis Wins Norwalk Invite

By Dan Chandler

The Ashland girls tennis team turned in one of its best performances of the season, capturing the overall team championship at the Norwalk Doubles Invitational.

At second doubles, seniors Claire Sharick and Melody Rickett went undefeated on the day to claim first place. At third doubles, senior Katherine Birkes teamed with junior Gwentyth Miller to also take first place.

The Arrows also had strong finishes at their other doubles positions. At first doubles, juniors Nora White and Claire Swaisgood battled to a fourth-place finish, while at fourth doubles, sophomore Anna Grissinger and freshman Raina Sikkenga rounded out the scoring with a fifth-place finish.

The Arrows were scheduled to play at West Holmes on August 18 and at home against Medina Highland on August 20. Results from those matches were not available at press time.



Ashland girls tennis players celebrate their team championship at the Norwalk Doubles Invitational. From left are Gwentyth Miller, Melody Rickett, Claire Sharick, Anna Grissinger, Katherine Birkes, Claire Swaisgood and Nora White. Not pictured is Raina Sikkenga.

Submitted Photo

Lemke Leads Redbirds Into New Season

Staff Report

After a decade on the Redbirds coaching staff, Keith Lemke has taken the reins of the Loudonville High School football program.

Following the retirement of Ed Honabarger, who stepped down at the conclusion of the 2025 season, Lemke is looking to help the Redbirds improve on their 3-7 (1-6 Knox Morrow Athletic Conference) record from a year ago.

The first-year head coach said his team has lofty goals, including winning a KMAC title, qualifying for the playoffs and making a postseason run.

“As a staff, we’re excited to watch the maturation of this team,” Lemke said. “We have a great group of leaders on this team, combined with good size and speed.

“One aspect that has made this team enjoyable to coach is the brotherhood they have formed. Our players believe in their individual ability and potential, but more importantly, they believe and trust one another on the field. That trust and faith in their teammates is what good football teams are made of.”

The Redbirds’ 2026 roster features numerous returning letter winners.

“We have a great combination of size and speed this season with players who have played a lot of football for us the last two seasons,” Lemke said. “Our biggest strength is the experience we have on both sides of the ball.”

Loudonville returns junior Collin Caley (RB/CB), who rushed for more than 700 yards and seven touchdowns last season and set the school record for kickoff return touchdowns in a season with three.

Arrows Host Weiss Invite

By Dan Chandler

The Arrows boys golf team hosted the 61st Annual Weiss Invitational at Ashland Golf Club on August 13.

Toledo St. John's Jesuit High School won the team title with a score of 296, topping a strong field. Ashland finished seventh with a team score of 337.

Sophomore Jacob Snay led the Arrows with an 80. Junior Ty Ellis followed with an 82, while junior Kale Durig carded an 85. Sophomore Jaxon Bowman rounded out Ashland's scoring with a 90. Sophomore Dylan Satterfield also competed for the Arrows.

The tournament at Mill Creek Golf Course in Boardman on August 14 was canceled due to storm damage from July 5.

The Arrows were scheduled to compete in the Madison Invite on August 21. Results were not available at press time.

Lemke also noted senior offensive tackle Jakub Poole (OT/DT) will be crucial to the offensive line. Junior three-year starter Chayse Wright (QB/LB), along with senior two-year starter Braylon Kauffman (RB/DE), will be key pieces of the offense. Junior three-year starter Nic Buzzard (WR/FS) will also make a big impact for the Redbirds.

Other returning players include seniors Carson Hustack (OT/DE), Blane Young (OC/DT) and Gavin Hustack (OT/DE); juniors Ridge Bernard (G/DT), Trenton Gaines (TE/DE) and Quentyn Kauffman (WR/CB); and sophomores Brayden Fenton (WR/SS) and Harrison Ross-Patrick (RB/SS).

The Redbirds haven't had a winning season since 2022 and lost seven letter winners from last season. Among the biggest losses are All-Ohio running back/strong safety Josiah Hershberger and All-KMAC defensive lineman Drew Robinson.

“Josiah was an exceptional player who excelled on both sides of the ball for us. He was pound-for-pound one of the best players in Ashland County last season,” Lemke said. “All-Region IV/All-Conference defensive lineman Drew Robinson played a pivotal role on our D-line last season.”

Lemke said the biggest focus in the offseason was finding a way to finish games.

“We lost three games last season by seven points or less,” he said. “Our guys have been working exceptionally hard the past six months in the weight room and on the practice field to make sure we close out games.”

The Redbirds opened the season Friday, August 21, at Mapleton. They travel to New London August 28.

Ashland Girls Golf at Lexington Invitational

By Dan Chandler

The Ashland High School girls golf team traveled to Oak Tree Golf Course on August 14 to compete in the Lexington Invitational. The Arrows posted a team score of 376.

Junior Chloe Crunkilton led Ashland with an 86. Senior Natalie Kohler shot 88, while senior Samantha Mauriocourt carded a 99. Senior Aubrey Oslie and sophomore Sophie Hochstetler each shot 103, tying for the final score that counted toward the team total. Freshman Adrienne Teevan also competed and carded a 105.

The Arrows girls will return to action August 25 at Wooster Country Club.

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