

Thank you for making our community better



LOCAL NEWS

By Jim Bebbington

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As 2021 ends our communities are gathering to celebrate and look back on a year in which our region has grown stronger, despite many challenges. We have learned, adapted, relied on each other, grown more resilient.

There is real momentum toward a more secure future for all who live here; we see it every day in our reporting — expanded economic opportunity, vitality downtown, new solutions to problems. I want to thank our subscribers for supporting local journalism by sharing some of what their support accomplished to help us continue to tell our region's stories.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued, reporter Jordan Laird asked trusted local health and medical experts your questions, and provided readers the latest on the most pressing issues. She writes the weekly Coronavirus Update newsletter to keep you informed, going beyond the daily numbers and headlines.

Community Impact Editor Nick Hrkman extended our popular series of live video interviews, Dayton Daily News Community Conversations, with an expert panel who gave parents deep insight into what they needed to know as COVID-19 vaccines became available to children.

Readers want us to connect them to the people in our community who make it better. We launched the Community Gems project this year, articles that highlight people who help, give and share. Community Gems is more than the coverage, it's a way for the whole community to join in and tell the story of the good things happening all around us, and the people who make it happen. We have always loved to tell the stories of the innovators, helpers and hard-working heroes in our area, and we will keep telling those stories.

Our community reporters — Nick Blizzard, Cornelius Frolik, Eileen McClory and many more — fanned out across the region to cover hundreds of candidates running for local school boards and city council races. We do this to provide real facts for voters, and to ensure the security of your vote. Now our teams are checking back with our local governments to see what they are planning to do to make their communities better. We'll be sharing everything we learn with our readers.

Our investigative teams dug deep on the most important topics in our region. In one series, reporter Josh Sweigart showed how tax money that was intended to help tenants weather the pandemic appears to have been misdirected. Some landlords returned the money and Montgomery County tightened rules for the program.

We celebrated the return of events, sports and other parts of our lives that were drastically impacted by the worst of the early pandemic.

And our subscribers gave of themselves. Our annual Valley Food Relief drive has so far raised \$136,000 for The Foodbank Inc., with a goal of raising \$250,000. If you have not given yet, please consider supporting the effort by going to DaytonDailyNews.com/FoodRelief to donate.

Our subscribers make it possible for us to do this work and more. Thank you. As the new year nears, we will continue to do journalism that helps make the Dayton region a great place to live.