

A free lifestyle magazine provided by the Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce

# ROSS | COUNTY

What it's like to work, live, and play  
in Southern Ohio **insider**



★ ★ ★  
STAR CITY  
PRINTING  
COMPANY



# GRANNY'S

## noodles

### My family's noodles made from scratch

#### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups of flour
- 3 eggs
- 1 tsp. salt

#### Directions

Mix and form into two balls of dough. Roll dough onto a floured surface until thin and sprinkle with flour. Cut dough into long, thin strips. Use noodles immediately or dry overnight and store in a food safe bag to keep in the freezer.

“One of the great things about making noodles from scratch is that the outcomes are endless. There are so many different dishes that call for this simple, yet perfect ingredient. It reminds me that no matter what, I always have the opportunity to make something great out of something simple.”

Emily Gerber Poe | Agent & Owner  
Gerber Insurance & Financial Services



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# PROUD TO BE A PART OF WORLD HERITAGE

Well, it's happened. Through the hard work of many people in our beloved little town, we have officially been awarded a World Heritage accreditation making the local ceremonial native American earthworks a registered important part of human history. With this we enter a very exciting time for our area. To think that we, little Chillicothe, are among only 25 sites throughout the entire United States. The earthworks are now among such sites as, Yellowstone National Park, the Grand Canyon, and Independence Hall, to name a few.

However impressive it is to be among some of these beautiful and cultural significant sites in the world, it pales to how impressive the love for this area pushed so many to push to make this happen. This was truly a labor of love for many folks over many years and the hard work that they have put into this cannot be understated. Hours of reports, applications, interviews, and research.

Don't let the importance of our place in World Heritage be lost on you. It is something to be proud of. And as a life long resident I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of those who made this happen.

I cannot wait to see what happens next, Ross County.



**Jarrod DePugh**  
Life Long Resident  
Co-Founder/Creative Director  
Metropolis Design Studios

**LEARN MORE** We encourage readers to learn more about what it means to be a World Heritage Accredited site by visiting [whc.unesco.org](http://whc.unesco.org) for more information.

provided by the  
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Commerce**

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**COVER PHOTO BY** Gunner Barnes

# Finding your place to shine



## Mike Throne

President/CEO  
Chillicothe-Ross  
Chamber of  
Commerce

This past year marked 25 years of living and working in Chillicothe and Ross County.

Time, as they say, has flown.

I grew up near Lake Erie in Sandusky. The land is flat, and the tallest structure is whatever the biggest roller coaster at Cedar Point is at the time. It's flat, folks. Even the roads seem straight and unremarkable. I went to school at Bowling Green and the best thing I can say about winters in BG is that you eventually stop feeling how cold it is because the wind perpetually seems to be in your face.

I arrived here in 1997 having never managed anyone – including myself (!) – and having lived in northern Ohio for nearly my entire life. The hills looked like mountains to a flatlander. Making new friends and finding ways to channel my passions were the challenges ahead of me.

Most who know me will tell you I am not the most patient of people, so I threw myself in many different scenarios to help – the United Way Day of Caring, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of South Central Ohio, Substance Abuse Prevention Alliance, as well as church and other community projects.

All I wanted was a chance to connect. And, this is where I got the first chance to become something I didn't know I wanted to be. I always looked at myself as someone who wanted to be "a citizen," and not just a resident. The difference, in my mind, is that residents merely exist in a place, passing time, but not contributing and connecting deeply. Citizens care deeply, contribute, and try to leave an indelible mark on the community.

I was busy, but not making much of a mark. I slowed down and figured out the needs of the community first, then offered my help where I thought I could assist. Sometimes that help was welcomed, while at others it wasn't.

Slowly, the community helped me find my footing and fueled my growth. It's a story I've heard time and again.

Through my podcast, "Feels Like Home," I've had the opportunity to interview a few people like myself – transplants from another part of the world. Almost universally, they say some variation of, "Chillicothe was the first place to ever give me a chance."

But it's not just transplants that find this a place to shine. I know a great many natives who in the past decade have decided to take a chance on making a side hustle a full-time business or sought to fill a need in the community by starting a new venture. Veterans coming home after serving their country renovate buildings into popular restaurants. Long-time bartenders start their own pubs – and flourish with superb cocktail menus.

Maybe you're arriving in Ross County with your first opportunity to shine. Or maybe you're a native who has sought an opportunity to fulfill a dream. Maybe, in a few years, you'll be the one who looks back and sees how the opportunity found you here in Ross County.

I know I did.



Mike Throne is the president and CEO of the Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce and the co-host, with Marty Ford, of the Feels Like Home podcast, available where you get podcasts. Reach out to him at [mthrone@chillicotheohio.com](mailto:mthrone@chillicotheohio.com).



# ROSS COUNTY OHIO

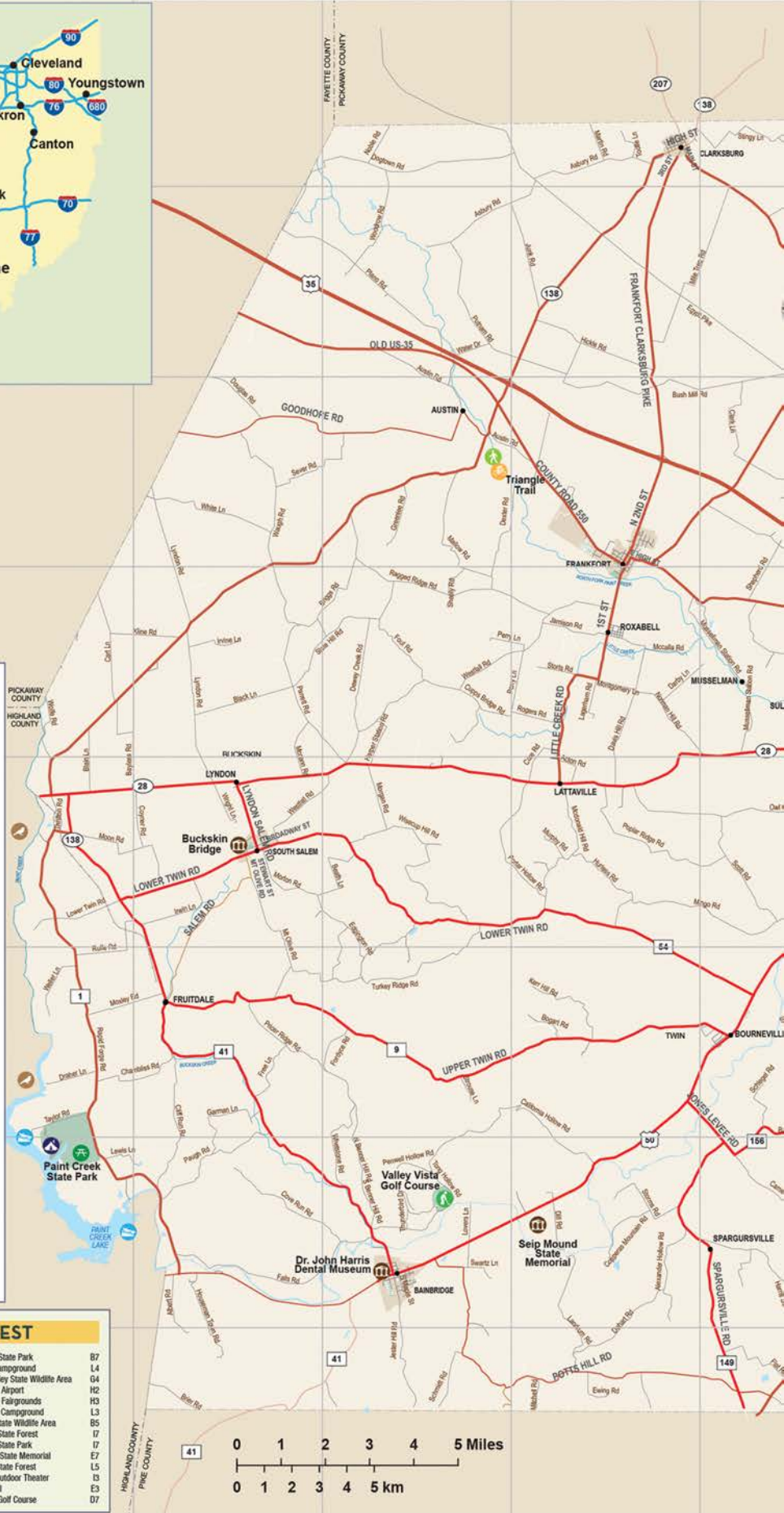


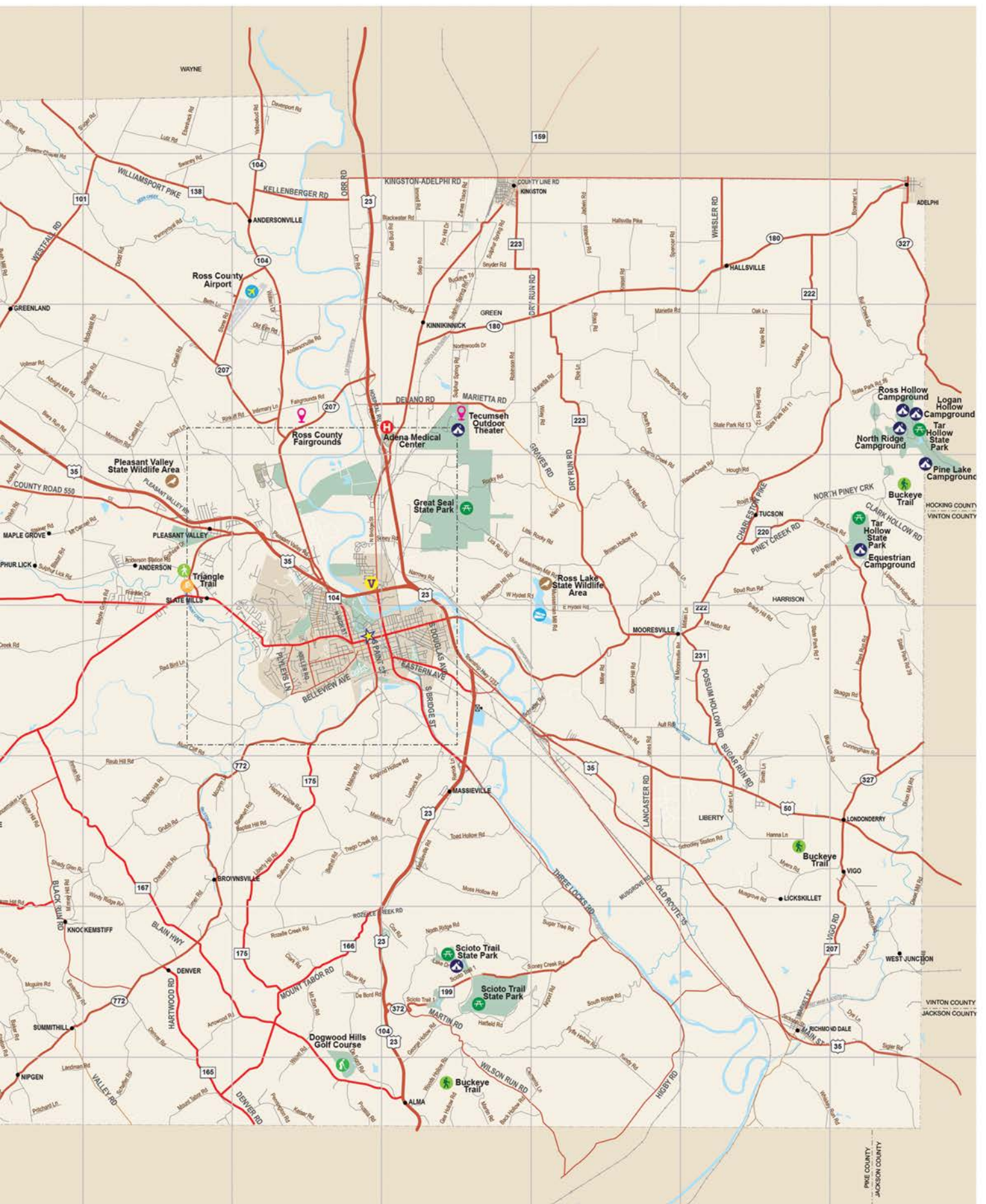
### LEGEND

- US HIGHWAY
- STATE HIGHWAY
- COUNTY HIGHWAY
- POINT OF INTEREST
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- CITY/MUNICIPAL PARK
- MUSEUM/HISTORICAL SITE
- GOLF COURSE/COUNTRY CLUB
- CEMETARY
- HOSPITAL
- SWIMMING AREA
- POST OFFICE
- COURTHOUSE
- VISITOR CENTER
- LIBRARY
- FIRE STATION
- STATE WILDLIFE AREA
- STATE PARK
- INDUSTRIAL/COMMERCIAL PARK
- UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE
- WALKING TRAIL
- BICYCLE TRAIL
- BOAT LAUNCH
- AIRPORT
- CAMPGROUND
- HIKING TRAIL

### POINTS OF INTEREST

Adena Medical Center	H3	Paint Creek State Park	B7
Boat Launch	B7	Fine Lake Campground	L4
Buckeye Trail	18	Pleasant Valley State Wildlife Area	G4
Buckskin Bridge	C5	Ross County Airport	H2
Campground	B6	Ross County Fairgrounds	H3
Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce/		Ross Hollow Campground	L3
Convention and Visitors Bureau	H4	Ross Lake State Wildlife Area	B5
Daywood Hills Golf Course	H7	Soloto Trail State Forest	L7
Dr. John Harris Dental Museum	D7	Soloto Trail State Park	E7
Equestrian Campground	L5	Seip Mound State Memorial	E7
Great Seal State Park	I4	Tar Hollow State Forest	L5
Logan Hollow Campground	L3	Tecumseh Outdoor Theater	I3
North Ridge Campground	L3	Triangle Trail	E3
Paint Creek Lake State Wildlife Area	B6	Valley Vista Golf Course	D7





PINE COUNTY  
JACKSON COUNTY

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# Ross County School District Grade Card



The 2023 Best School Districts ranking is based on rigorous analysis of key statistics and millions of reviews from students and parents using data from the U.S. Department of Education. Ranking factors include state test scores, college readiness, graduation rates, SAT/ACT scores, teacher quality, public school district ratings, and more. All grade card information provided by [niche.com](https://www.niche.com). The Chillicothe / Ross County Chamber of Commerce has no barring or input on the data provided.



## UNIOTO SCHOOL DISTRICT

**B-** OVERALL  
GRADE

- C+** Academics
- B** Teachers
- A-** Sports
- B-** Diversity
- C+** College Prep
- B-** Administration

Union-Scioto Local School District is a public school district located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 2,091 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 20 to 1. According to state test scores, 63% of students are at least proficient in math and 64% in reading.

unioto.org  
740.773.4102  
1565 Egypt Pike  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



## CHILLICOTHE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C** OVERALL  
GRADE

- C** Academics
- B-** Teachers
- B-** Sports
- B-** Diversity
- C+** College Prep
- C** Administration

Chillicothe City School District is a public school district located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 2,658 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 20 to 1. According to state test scores, 48% of students are at least proficient in math and 58% in reading.

chillicothe.k12.oh.us  
740.775.4250  
425 Yoctangee Pkwy  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



## ZANE TRACE SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C+** OVERALL  
GRADE

- C+** Academics
- B** Teachers
- B** Sports
- C** Diversity
- C+** College Prep
- B-** Administration

Zane Trace Local School District is a public school district located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 1,267 students in grades K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 18 to 1. According to state test scores, 60% of students are at least proficient in math and 68% in reading.

zanetrace.org  
740.775.1355  
946 State Route 180  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



## SOUTHEASTERN SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C+** OVERALL  
GRADE

- B-** Academics
- A-** Teachers
- C+** Sports
- C+** Diversity
- C** College Prep
- B+** Administration

SE Local School District (Chillicothe) is a public school district located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 949 students in grades K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 15 to 1. According to state test scores, 66% of students are at least proficient in math and 67% in reading.

sepanthers.k12.oh.us  
740.774.2003  
2003 Lancaster Rd  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



## PAINT VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C**

**OVERALL  
GRADE**

- C** Academics
- B** Teachers
- C+** Sports
- C-** Diversity
- C** College Prep
- B** Administration

Paint Valley Local School District is a public school district located in BAINBRIDGE, OH. It has 791 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 12 to 1. According to state test scores, 39% of students are at least proficient in math and 57% in reading.

[paintvalleylocalschools.org](http://paintvalleylocalschools.org)  
7454 US Highway 50 W  
Bainbridge, Ohio 45612



## HUNTINGTON SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C-**

**OVERALL  
GRADE**

- C-** Academics
- B+** Teachers
- C+** Sports
- C-** Diversity
- C-** College Prep
- C** Administration

Huntington Local School District is a public school district located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 1,056 students in grades K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 15 to 1. According to state test scores, 45% of students are at least proficient in math and 48% in reading.

[huntsmen.org](http://huntsmen.org)  
740.663.5892  
188 Huntsman Rd  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



## ADENA SCHOOL DISTRICT

**C-** OVERALL  
GRADE

- C-** Academics
- C-** Teachers
- B-** Sports
- C** Diversity
- C-** College Prep
- D+** Administration

Adena Local School District is a public school district located in FRANKFORT, OH. It has 1,165 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 22 to 1. According to state test scores, 59% of students are at least proficient in math and 60% in reading.

[adena.k12.oh.us](http://adena.k12.oh.us)  
3367 County Rd 550  
Frankfort, Ohio 45628

## PRIVATE SCHOOL



## ROSS COUNTY CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

**C+** OVERALL  
GRADE

- B-** Academics
- C** Teachers
- B** Clubs & Activities
- C** Diversity
- C** College Prep
- C+** Administration

Ross County Christian Academy is a private, Christian school located in CHILLICOTHE, OH. It has 246 students in grades PK, K-12 with a student-teacher ratio of 11 to 1.

[rccacademy.org](http://rccacademy.org)  
740.772.4552  
2215 Egypt Pike  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601



# ALL IN FOR COMMUNITY

THERE IS A REVIVAL GOING ON IN ROSS COUNTY LED BY MANY LOCAL FEMALE BUSINESS OWNERS WHO ARE LOOKING TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THEIR COMMUNITY FOR THE BETTER.

WE ASKED THE SAME 5 QUESTIONS TO SOME OF THESE WOMEN.

HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID.



## Brooke Chatham-McAbee

Owner

**PINK LOTUS SALON AND DAY SPA**



### **HOW HAVE YOU CULTIVATED A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AROUND YOUR BUSINESS, AND WHAT IMPACT HAS IT HAD ON YOUR SUCCESS?**

I use social media and am a member of the chamber. In my free time I do a lot of volunteer work, and I work at the VA on Monday and Friday. I have 3 in patient units and 1 out patient. I enjoy helping people that I can, and I am working towards my d3 and 40 certification which helps with victims of breast cancer and scarring to help build their confidence

### **IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES?**

With having a daughter in the 5th grade I like to do free back-to-school haircuts every school year. I feel no child should not be able to get a haircut before school as it can help start their year with confidence. I also do discounts for school dance makeup and hair if parents are unable to pay. I try to set up booths at St Mary's or other religious institutions for free haircuts when I am able.

### **HOW DO YOU STAY ENGAGED WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO GATHER FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS FROM THEM?**

By using Social media, building and keeping relationships with clients, taking feedback from clients and customers during their visit. I also always keep opinions and recommended items for the salon that my clients suggest, I try to make sure to provide extra photos for references for hair for my clients. I also provide facials for older customers with free customization according to their needs to help build their confidence

### **HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGIES TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY OVER TIME?**

By keeping my space diverse. My policy is your vibe attracts your tribe, I always keeps conversations safe, and my space will always be a judgement free zone. Hate will not be tolerated. Everyone should feel free to be themselves and we always try to accommodate each guest no matter their background

### **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART AS A VALUABLE AND INTEGRAL PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE THAT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS AND SUPPORTERS?**

A peaceful environmental. A personal experiences for each customer. I'm trying to keep old school values in the space. I'm for the people. I'm not here to take someone's money, I would never do something to benefit me and hurt them, I've built my space on a lot of integrity and I wouldn't do anything to them that I wouldn't want done to myself.



3127 WALNUT CREEK RD  
CHILLICOTHE, OH 45601  
740.656.1286



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## Kennedy Moss

Owner

**DEEPLY ROOTED CAFE**



### **HOW HAVE YOU CULTIVATED A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AROUND YOUR BUSINESS, AND WHAT IMPACT HAS IT HAD ON YOUR SUCCESS?**

First off, I was born and raised in Frankfort so just being a local has helped with my sense of community. My staff are also local to Frankfort. This has deeply impacted the success and growth of the business because individuals in our village support their own. The supporters are also the biggest influencers and will promote the business on social media by sharing their drink.

### **IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES?**

Deeply Rooted Cafe is involved and participates in many community events and donates to the local school teams and activities. There are a few small community groups that will have their regular meetings at our location instead of someone's home. We support several other local businesses by offering their products in the coffee shop as well.

### **HOW DO YOU STAY ENGAGED WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO GATHER FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS FROM THEM?**

With all the modes of communication, Deeply Rooted Cafe is still a strong word of mouth business. My staff and I talk with our customers and supporters daily to know what drinks work better, we keep track of what is purchased, and we listen to our customers when specialty drinks are offered or what they would like for us to serve.

### **HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGIES TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY OVER TIME?**

I started my business on the street with a pop-up tent! The community has helped me realize my dream and allowed me to move into a permanent space within six months of opening my business. Over the past year, I've seen the interests of the customers and tweaked the offerings and added items from other local businesses. I have a vision and ideas for future growth as well.

### **WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART AS A VALUABLE AND INTEGRAL PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE THAT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS AND SUPPORTERS?**

I have seen firsthand the value of being a part of my community as a business owner. I see the customers who just want a familiar face and a friendly conversation in the morning. My staff and I know the lives of our regulars, we know if they are having a bad day and hopefully, we can provide a small ounce of positivity and encouragement. I communicate that back to our customers by giving back to the community and being a visible part of our town.



15 NORTH MAIN ST  
FRANKFORT, OH 45628



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## Christy Renner

Owner

### AMARISSA WOODS LEAF HOUSE AND SPICE SHOP

#### HOW DO YOU STAY ENGAGED WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS, AND WHAT METHODS DO YOU USE TO GATHER FEEDBACK AND INSIGHTS FROM THEM?

Here at Amarissa Woods we try to manage the balancing act of combining the modern aspects of tea with the traditional. The consideration and devotion to all of these facets is the guarantor for first class teas and spices. There are very few foods and beverages that have as many facets as tea. It is one of the most important beverages.

I think we are really different as a business. Where else can you come in and sample a free cup of tea? Plus, our staff is highly educated in the tea business, and we educate our customers with that knowledge. Not only have we taken classes with the experts in the tea business, but we are presenting a class at the World Tea Expo this year.

#### HOW HAVE YOU ADAPTED YOUR BUSINESS STRATEGIES TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY OVER TIME?

When we first started over a dozen years ago at different festivals, we listened to what people wanted in a tea. While tea is the second most consumed beverage in the world, here in the US after that famous party in Boston it fell a few notches. Our consumers, myself included love a flavored tea. When I opened the shop, we created what we call "Design a Tea". You can customize any tea by adding in different herbs, fruits, or flowers. You can also design something and name it so you can create a special blend for someone you care about.

We do the same with our herbs and spices. We have customers that come in looking for a special blend and we can roast and grind the blends for you.

#### HOW HAVE YOU CULTIVATED A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AROUND YOUR BUSINESS, AND WHAT IMPACT HAS IT HAD ON YOUR SUCCESS?

Amarissa is Hebrew for "Given by God". My employees and I try to make a positive impact in the community. As far as an impact to the business that's hard to say. I know giving back brings a sense of gratitude for what God has given me, so maybe that helps you bond to a community in unique ways.

#### IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORT OTHER LOCAL BUSINESSES?

I support different businesses by highlighting their products at the shop, such as the B&E Candle Company, Andre Bakery and my friend Michele is making us handmade ceramic tea cups and last Christmas we hosted Stephanie Clemmons music recital for her students.

We had Tim Everhart, the Culture Resource Program Manager for Hopewell Culture National Historical Park stay here at the house. He is working on a website for the state of Ohio that ties in all of the mounds in preparation and in anticipation of the World Heritage Announcement. Amarissa Woods will be hosting a presentation by Tim that we are very excited about.

Sleepy Hollow and Mamma Mia cast both stayed at the house and that was exciting.

And also, we have hosted different community events such as the American Society of Quality Local Scioto Valley Chapter with a tea talk.

#### FINAL QUESTION ON THE NEXT PAGE



202 S PAINT ST  
CHILLICOTHE, OH 45601  
740.804.1114



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**WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE SETS YOUR BUSINESS APART AS A VALUABLE AND INTEGRAL PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY, AND HOW DO YOU COMMUNICATE THAT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS AND SUPPORTERS?**

We are letting people into our home. We enjoy sharing the history of the Ingham Mansion built by the two brothers that created the first pulp paper mill that was bought by Mead. We even have a few ghost stories! They built the mansion and lived here with their two sisters, one a widow and one that never married. While we were restoring the home you could almost feel a presence of approval. I think it was the ladies.

I have decorated it with antiques that I have collected since I was a little girl. My husband, my family and my wonderful friends work alongside me and that shows in the atmosphere. Many times, people come in the door, and they express the peacefulness of the house. I like to believe the Ingham sisters approve. We decorate for all the holidays, so you never know what colors we showcase. Sort of like the teas and spices, I love variety.

Just outside our front door we have what we like to call "The Amarissa Woods Trees" two big, old trees we hang baskets from. They are our giving trees. In the hot summer we put cold bottles of juice and water out for people walking by. We love to put candy, little toys, and chalk in the hanging baskets. People leave us beautiful messages all the time. This winter we hung hats and gloves.

It just comes back to gratitude for what God has given myself and my extended tea family. Everyone that comes through these doors are a part of that.

**United Way**

**Building a STRONGER COMMUNITY**

**TOGETHER**

**United Way of Ross County**

**2-1-1**

**Get Connected. Get Help.**

No matter the situation 211 connects people in need with resources and services in our community.  
United Way of Ross County

**ADVERTISE IN THE NEXT ISSUE!**

Be a part of this publication! Contact Bobbi Kellough at [bkellough@chillicotheohio.com](mailto:bkellough@chillicotheohio.com) for more info!

# GREATER CHILlicoTHE & ROSS COUNTY DEVELOPMENT



Kenworth Test Building groundbreaking: JobsOhio ED Grant and local Enterprise Zone Tax Abatement support \$44 million test facility.

by Tammy Eallonardo, Ohio CEO

## OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND IN APPALACHIA

In 2022, Gov. DeWine announced the Appalachia Community Grant program. This \$500 million grant offers unprecedented opportunity to transform our region. Working closely with the Governor's Office of Appalachia and the Ohio Valley Regional Development Commission, GCRCD has organized public & private stakeholders to plan for our future.

## BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION

A strong BR&E program provides quick solutions to many challenges. Through a network of partnerships, \$1.16 million in grant support was leveraged to create 288 new jobs and retain 5081 jobs across 12 projects that represented \$68 million capital investment in Ross County (2022).

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

In its second year, the Workforce Strong video series has two new entries, recorded and produced by the Visual Communication & Design (VCAD) students of Pickaway-Ross Career & Technology Center. The VCAD students experienced a first-hand look at Ross County manufacturing and learned about career opportunities here at home!

## SITE DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Availability of skilled workforce, access to major transportation routes and resources makes Ross County attractive to INTEL suppliers. As we work to increase our limited sites & buildings inventory to meet the demand, we are grateful to our partners at JobsOhio, OhioSE, JEDISO and Fluor BWXT who provide funds for property development to support this initiative.



VCAD students shooting a segment for "Workforce Strong" a web video series produced by The Greater Chillicothe/Ross County Development group.

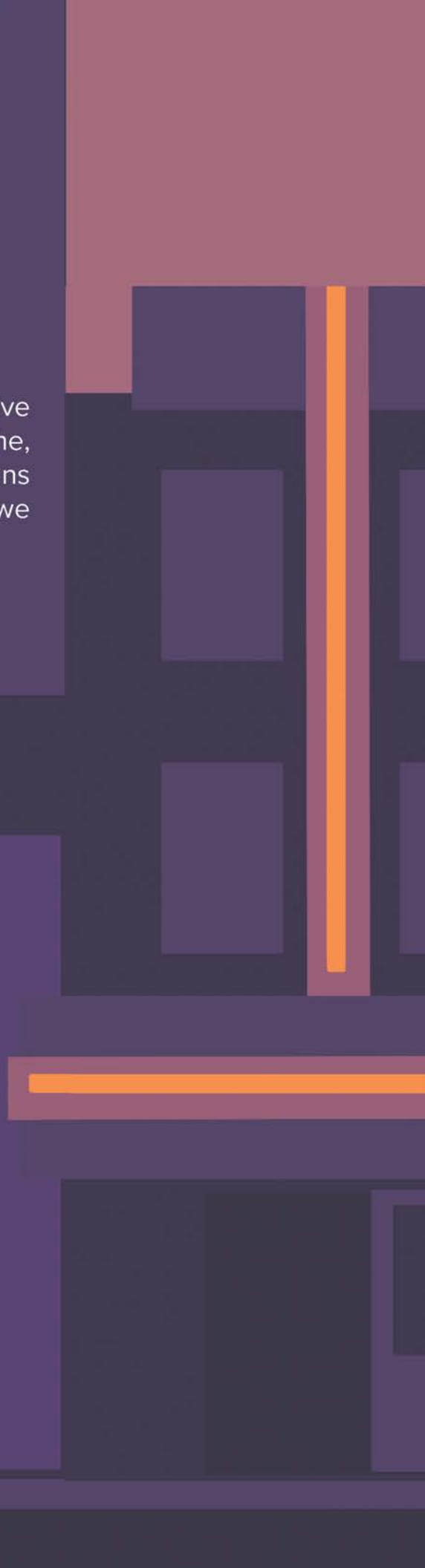
Greater Chillicothe & Ross County Development is an investor organization. Our mission is made possible by investor support.

To learn how YOU can be part of building our legacy, visit [GCRCD.com](http://GCRCD.com) or contact Tammy Eallonardo: 740-703-0348.

# Arts & Culture

We asked local entertainer and comedian, Lori Graves, to give us the run down of what there is to do after dark in Chillicothe, Ohio. Being a small town in Southern Ohio your expectations might be small, however, we think you'll be surprised what we have going on.

Intro Illustration by **Tim Smith**



Chillicothe, Ohio

# Night Life

by Lori Graves

In an area rich with history and a thriving downtown it isn't much of a stretch to assume Chillicothe would also present an active nightlife to its visitors. My name is Lori Graves. As the local entertainment correspondent for the Chillicothe Gazette (and a professional comedian) please allow me to tell you about what this southern Ohio gem of a town has in store for you on your visit. We have many known destination entertainment attractions like the number one outdoor drama in the nation Tecumseh or the historic Majestic Theatre. But for that small town, local feel, let me guide you to some of my favorite spots.

Chillicothe has a history of live entertainment that dates back to the vaudeville days. During that era many famous performers appeared at the Majestic (located on Second Street) including Milton Berle and Laurel & Hardy. The legend himself Bob Hope was there as well. Our town can boast of not only nationally known performers taking its stages but has its own roster of local talent. It has been said that Chillicothe has more talent per square inch than any other town its size in the state. Like I said earlier, we have a history here.

In addition to hosting entertainment here we also produce. Jazz singer Nancy Wilson, a three-time Grammy Award-winner, was born in Chillicothe. Grammy Award-winning drummer and educator Paul Francis is also a Chillicothe native and returns to town a couple times a year for a performance with his band, the Paul Francis Quartet. You may know Paul from his work on the Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett album and subsequent PBS special "Cheek to Cheek."

You certainly can't have entertainment without venues and spaces to present performances. So here are some of the places I recommend you enjoy a night out on the town in Chillicothe.

The Dock at Water, on Water Street of course, is a great place to begin your entertainment tour of downtown Chillicothe. Known locally for their wings (get them grilled, you won't regret it) you can also find full band entertainment a few times a month. The Dock books a variety of music genres and no two bands are the same. If you are lucky, you will find local singer/celebrity Cameron Mitchell there on a Friday for his karaoke show. In the summer months, catch one of Ross County's talented local guitar players on their spacious, partially covered patio or enjoy a Sunday Funday in the same space.

The Pour House at Machinery Hall is a full service restaurant that serves a high quality, gastro pub menu and features 30 beers on draft. The building is located at 25 E. Second St., was built in 1881, and

underwent a full renovation in 2016. The Pour House is one of your local, live entertainment destinations. From weekly trivia nights to music to comedy this venue has it all. In addition to their main space the Pour House also contains Terrace 27, the area's first rooftop terrace. Terrace 27 features a 60 seat dining area that includes a fire table lounge overlooking the Majestic Theatre courtyard and Second Street. Weather permitting, it isn't uncommon to catch a comedy show on 27 during the summer or an acoustic music set.

The Crosskeys Tavern, located at 19 E. Main St., is the oldest bar in our downtown area. The tavern was established in 1972 by the late Tom Burke and the late Dale Perry, but the building itself dates back to the 1800s and has served as a tavern since the early 1900s. The 'Keys (as it is known locally) has hosted more live music over the years than any other venue in town. The original owners were musicians and had their own band, the Goosetown Astonishers, which is one of the oldest, continually playing Dixieland jazz bands in the country. You can still hear them play one Thursday a month at the bar where it all started. Known for their hospitality, the 'Keys has a great old style tavern menu that compliments the atmosphere and the vibe of the building. Live music by local bands happens on the weekends in the front bar and the Crosskeys has a "back" bar called O'Malley's where you will find DJs spinning the latest tunes and a wall of dart boards.

If you are into haunted buildings, the Crosskeys is featured in several books, including the Haunted Ohio series by ghosthunter Chris Woodyard. Any local sitting at the bar can tell you about Harold, the resident ghost of the 'Keys. Harold likes to turn lights on and off, move objects, and make sounds in the basement. Some people believe Harold may be the ghost of a man who was killed in the alley. As a former bartender for Tom Burke, I can personally attest that something happens in the building when it is quiet. Visit and find out for yourselves, if you dare.

Old Capitol Brewing is Chillicothe's first local brewery in almost 70 years. One visit to their website and you will see these folks are serious about their beer. OCB is also one of the premier live stages in town and a host to comedy as well as local, small band entertainment. Stop by for a crafted on site beer from their brewery and enjoy the cozy atmosphere of their taproom. Don't let the size fool you. Great things happen in this small package.

The establishment Steiner's Speakeasy and owner/operator Tara Gillum have put Chillicothe on the map in the bar world not only for music but for



# MAJESTIC

"CHILLICOTHE HAS A HISTORY OF LIVE ENTERTAINMENT THAT DATES BACK TO THE VAUDEVILLE DAYS. DURING THAT ERA MANY FAMOUS PERFORMERS APPEARED AT THE MAJESTIC (LOCATED ON SECOND STREET) INCLUDING MILTON BERLE AND LAUREL & HARDY. THE LEGEND HIMSELF BOB HOPE WAS THERE AS WELL."

Tara's one of a kind, hand crafted, award winning cocktails. Steiner's has received many accolades since opening in 2014. Greatbourbon.com called Steiner's "one of America's Great Bourbon Bars." Cointreau named Tara's "I Love You Elote" margarita "the Best Margarita in the Nation" AND she was a cocktail creator for the 2022 Uncle Nearest whiskey calendar. Did I mention she created a cocktail for Snoop Dog's gin? Because she did.

Tara's craft beer and prohibition style cocktail bar is also a nationally known music destination. Steiner's wasn't named the #5 Americana and Folk Music venue in the country by America Roots Magazine for nothing. You can find live music at 31 S. Paint St. in Chillicothe every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Artists who have graced the SS stage include Tyler Childers, Colter Wall, Shannon McNally, Arlo McKinley, Devon Gilfillian, Smooth Hound Smith, and Charles Wesley Godwin. Make sure you place Steiner's Speakeasy high on your nightlife to-do list.

The Cozy Inn Bar & Grill at 339 Western Ave. in Chillicothe is the home of the Cozy Burger. This Chillicothe staple is a go to for locals and, if you are in town on a Friday in the fall and winter, a stop here for their potato soup is a must. The Cozy brings in live entertainment every weekend that includes full bands and solo acoustic singers as well as hosting weekly music trivia.

Nightlife in the Chillicothe/Ross County area is not just in our city limits. A short drive in any direction could lead you to a fun "dive" bar or an unexpected venue for entertainment.

One of the area's favorite country "dives" is Wagner's Roadhouse. About two miles outside of city limits, Wag's will satisfy your bar food cravings. From tenderloin sandwiches to wings to your fryer basket staples, everything on their menu compliments the frosty, cold adult beverage of your choice. You can expect local and nationally touring artists on their inside or outside stage throughout the year as well as weekend karaoke. Grab some darts from the bar and see how good your aim is on one of their boards. You will feel at home in their relaxed, out of the way, country bar atmosphere.

Na'zdravie Vineyard and Winery is a ten acre vineyard located just outside of Kingston and is fifteen miles from the Chillicothe town center. Its floor to ceiling windows with a view of sunsets over the property, make it an excellent place to enjoy a glass (or bottle) of their Ohio Wine Competition gold award winning Corot Noir. Naz also hosts live music

throughout the year and presents touring musicians as well as local talent. It is the perfect place to spend a relaxing evening enjoying one of their wood fired pizzas or cheese plates with one of their ten plus in stock wine selections.

Creekside Occasions is a wedding and an event venue that sits on a six acre renovated farm outside of Chillicothe located at 14847 State Route 772, one and a half miles from the city center. More than a wedding venue, Creekside hosts a variety of music and comedy throughout the year for non-profits as well as public events. Settled on the banks of scenic Paint Creek this fun space has a fully heated and cooled barn with indoor and outdoor facilities that you can also rent.

One can find Bell Manor about 10 miles outside of Chillicothe. It is a breathtaking wedding venue nestled on a 40-acre private estate that contains its own bourbon bar in addition to a fully stocked bar. In addition to making wedding memories Bell Manor hosts local balls, galas, comedy, music, and holiday events. Their Fourth of July party is a yearly must attend event. And there is their annual collaboration with LoriG Comedy, *Witch Night on the Hill...at Bell Manor*, that happens every October. Settled in the hills of southern Ohio, the views from their balconies are some of the

best in the county. A window lined main space opens up to a relaxing balcony area or another party sized patio area on the ground level.

But what about comedy? In this small town? The answer is yes. For over a decade I have been bringing weekly laughs to the Chillicothe area. The venues I presented to you here have all been a host to one of my comedy shows. This town has been visited by many, many regional comics as well as nationally touring acts such as Vince Morris, Donnie Baker, and Henry Cho to name a few. You can learn more about me and the Chillicothe comedy scene in the piece about me in this magazine.

Something important to note...the Chillicothe downtown area falls under DORA, which means "designated outdoor refreshment areas." DORA gives downtown patrons the opportunity to "sip and stroll" while visiting. You may find out more information about DORA by asking the establishment you are a patron of or by checking out the Downtown Chillicothe website.

Chillicothe, Ohio. Come for the history and the beautiful scenery but stick around when the sun goes down. We would love to entertain you.



PICTURED: SINGER/SONG WRITER ZAC MCFADDEN PERFORMING; BELL MANOR INTERIOR; COMEDIAN LORI GRAVES PERFORMING AT THE HISTORIC MAJESTIC THEATER





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# The Marvelous Miss Lori Graves

Written by  
Aprille Park

Comedian and Ross County Native Lori Graves personally launched the standup comedy scene in Chillicothe. We sat down with Lori to learn how she got into standup, what her future plans are for her career, and how she would like to see the local scene grow and evolve.



## **WHAT SPARKED YOUR INTEREST INTO GETTING INTO STANDUP COMEDY?**

LG: I was a bartender for almost 20 years and I've always told people when you are bartending you are basically on stage. I would crack jokes with my customers and kid with them while I was working and I didn't realize at the time I was entertaining them. People always told me I should do stand-up but I always laughed them off.

## **HOW DID YOU GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO START PERFORMING COMEDY?**

LG: Back in 2009 the Lewis Brothers, a band here in town, were planning a show at the Majestic Theatre with another band, Loose Pockets. I was bartending at the Crosskeys one night when Rusty and Rich (the Lewis Brothers) came in and said "Lori, we are going to do a show at the theatre and we would love for you to MC for us." Of course, I said I would. Then they told me I could try some comedy and I told them both they were insane. Rusty got really close to my face, looked me in the eyes, and said "you are 37 years old. If you don't do it now you never will." And that is how I started performing comedy.

## **SO THAT SHOW WAS YOUR FIRST OFFICIAL COMEDY PERFORMANCE?**

LG: Yes. August 8th was my first show. I performed comedy for the first time ever in front of 300 people at the Majestic Theater. When I talk to other comics they are blown away by that. Most people start comedy at bar open mics and perform in front of maybe eight people if they are lucky. No, my first time on stage was in front of 300 people in a theatre. Ha ha ha I don't do anything small. When I was on stage that night and heard that first laugh it was like something clicked. I knew it was something I wanted to do. I felt like I was home. I did two sets that night. I went down to the dressing room after my second set and I wrote "I did it" in two-inch letters in my notebook. I looked at myself in the mirror in the dressing room and said, "this is it, you are going to be a comedian." I still have that notebook by the way.

## **WHAT KIND OF COMEDY PERFORMANCES DID YOU DO AFTER THAT?**

LG: In March of 2010 I started my open mic at the Crosskeys Tavern and I am still running it. I've done different venues through the years but I have kept it going this entire time. I had never been to an open mic before starting this one so I looked up "how to run an open mic" and thought well hell, I can do this. The owner, Tom Burke, allowed me to start up the mic and was very encouraging of my comedy dreams. I hosted and closed every open mic back then. I didn't know any better. I didn't know any other comics to ask for advice. It was just me. Then in 2011, at the encouragement of my friends, I entered an amateur contest at the Dayton Funny Bone. I won my month, came back for the finals at the end of the year, and won second place. That opened a lot of doors for me to get booked in other places and it allowed me to meet other comics. I finally found a peer group. I am still friends with many of them to this day.

## **HOW DID YOU DECIDE TO LAUNCH THE COMEDY SCENE IN CHILLICOTHE?**

LG: I knew, because I lived here and I had a full-time job, I couldn't be driving somewhere out of town every night of the week so I thought, you know what? I'm going to do it. I'm going to create one here and I am going to do it myself. People around here really supported the open mic so I started booking shows. Comedy was a need that wasn't filled. It was a different form of entertainment for people and people wanted to laugh. I started booking the comics I had met in Dayton and Columbus. I would get a budget from the venues and I was able to start paying people to perform. The more shows I booked the more I started thinking, "maybe this is my calling. I'm going to take comedy to places that have never had comedy before." People who don't live close to a comedy club still deserve to laugh, so why not provide that for them? That's what I now do here and in other small southern Ohio towns. It is something I am proud of.

## **WHAT FUTURE PLANS DO YOU HAVE FOR CHILLICOTHE'S COMEDY SCENE?**

LG: I am on the board of directors now for the Majestic Theater so I want to bring in more comics, bigger names. I would also love to, in the next couple years, host a comedy festival in Chillicothe. A lot of towns big and small have comedy festivals and I would love to start one here. I want to keep producing quality shows, keep my open mic going, and in the future I would like to do something like a comedy camp for kids. When I was younger I didn't know I could do this for a living. No one told me there was a future in the comedy performing arts. There are so many kids out there who have a great sense of humor. There are probably kids right now thinking they want to be a comic and I want to tell them they can. Show them it is possible. And, I will gladly help them. We might have the next great comic growing up around here but we will never know if no one tells them they can do it. Ultimately, I want to keep comedy around here going for a long time; keep it thriving, keep it fresh and, you know...keep LoriG Comedy out there.

## **WHAT FUTURE GOALS DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUR COMEDY CAREER?**

LG: I always joke that I would like to retire doing cruise ships but my main goal is to never stop doing stand-up. I want to be that 80-year-old lady on a stage saying things that shock a crowd. I don't really see myself ever stopping. As long as I can talk and actually stand up I can still perform. As long as I stay out there and keep working and keep networking I don't see any reason why I would ever need to quit.



For information on Lori's upcoming shows and events look for @loricomedy on social media.

### WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE SOMEONE WHO'S INTERESTED IN GETTING INTO STANDUP COMEDY?

LG: I guess it would be to figure out what kind of comic you want to be. Do you want to be an online comic? Do you want to be a video comic? Or do you want to do stand-up? Know what you want to do because not every TikTok and Facebook "comic" can do stand-up. And not every stand-up comic can be successful on TikTok. If you want to be a stand-up comic, go do open mics and get as much stage time as you can. Go to other cities and perform in front of people other than your friends because your friends are always going to laugh at you. Make sure everyone can laugh at your jokes and everyone knows what you're talking about. Jokes about your city may not work in another place. Work, put in your time, and don't try to be something you're not. If you're not someone who cusses don't get on stage and try to use bad language because it's just awkward. Don't try to be edgy if you're not edgy. I will say if you think you want to try comedy, do it. Come to my open mic, any open mic, and you will get five minutes. And you know, you may do well, and you may not, but it is a bucket list item you can check off.

Life is short. If you want to try something, do it.

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Chillicothe: A Hidden Gem in Day Trip Destinations

# Day Tripping

by  
Aprille  
Park

Photo by Day Stewart

Due to its proximity to Columbus, and to highways that provide easy access from Cincinnati in southwest Ohio, and from the Hocking Hills region of southeast Ohio, Chillicothe is a great day trip destination. Though sometimes overlooked, regardless of the season, Chillicothe has a variety of things to do for visitors of all ages.

For history buffs, Chillicothe offers several sites available for visitors to enjoy while learning about years gone by. The Adena Mansion and Gardens, located west of downtown Chillicothe, is a historic estate built in the early 1800s, that was once owned by Ohio's sixth governor, Thomas Worthington. The home has now been restored to look much like it did while occupied by the Worthington family and is open as a museum and visitor center for guests to enjoy as they tour the grounds. The site property has both indoor and outdoor exhibits and features a great view of Mount Logan, which many believe is the depiction on Ohio's coat of arms. More information about the Adena Mansion and Gardens, including hours of operation and admission costs, can be found by visiting [www.adenamansion.com](http://www.adenamansion.com).

Another draw for history lovers is the Mound City Group. This historical site, located just off state route 104, is one of six separate stops that make up the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park; however, Mound City Group is the only site to have fully restored earthworks from the Hopewell culture. Here, visitors can stroll the grounds while learning about the mounds used as Hopewell ceremonial sites centuries ago. Mound City Group also features the only visitor center for the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park and has an all-terrain wheelchair that can be used by guests needing mobility assistance when visiting the mounds. Visit [www.nps.gov/hocu](http://www.nps.gov/hocu) to learn more about the Hopewell Culture National Historical Park and to plan your visit.



For visitors with children, Chillicothe has some great fun to offer. Located in downtown Chillicothe, bordering the First Capital District, the city's Yoctangee Park is a favorite for adults and children alike. Featuring access to the city pool in the summer, an ice-skating rink set up throughout the cold months, and the Santa House and light display that's available around the Christmas holiday, there's fun to be had at the park in all seasons. Additionally, the park features playground areas with equipment for children of all ages, and has shelter-houses, benches and picnic tables where visitors can rest while watching ducks and geese on the pond. Add in walking areas, access to the city's bike path-the Paint Creek Recreational Trail, that connects Chillicothe to Washington Court House, and the restored 1800s pump house-turned art gallery, and Yoctangee Park is a must-see for day trippers visiting the city.

Another great stop for visitors with youngsters is the Mighty Children's Museum. This interactive museum is located downtown and is designed top to bottom with exhibits that are both educational and fun. These hands-on exhibits provide activities that expose children to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields while allowing families to have fun learning together. The museum also offers programs including Music Time, Toddler Takeover, and Sensory Hour which features reduced lighting and modified sounds as well as available staff to help with any special needs a guest may have. Additionally, the museum offers extended hours the last Friday of each month, making it ideal for a late afternoon stop after a day of exploring all the city has to offer.

Visit [www.mightymuseum.org](http://www.mightymuseum.org) for more information, including admission costs and hours of operation.



For foodies, there's no shortage of options throughout Chillicothe. An addition to many popular chain restaurants, Chillicothe offers some great, local cuisine as well. Downtown visitors will be near some local favorites including Old Canal Smoke House, Hometown Hibachi, and The Pour House at Machinery Hall. The newly established downtown brunch spot The Coop is perfect for meeting friends and family. Offering a great selection of Ohio IPAs, downtown is home to Fifty West Brewing Company. For a sweet treat, visitors can stop in High-Five Cakes, or Grandpa Joe's Candy Shop, and a morning or afternoon pick-me-up can be found at Röst Coffee, or the many other little coffee shops throughout historic downtown.

Downtown is also home to activities such as Southern Ohio Axe Throwing, and pottery painting at Nellie Dog Pottery & Paints. Local retail options include Hometown Threads, Rustic Gals Boutique, Mill City Apparel, and Ivy's Home and Garden. Live comedy shows, concerts and plays, as well as movie screenings can be seen at the historic Majestic Theatre, and River's Bend, a local bicycle shop, offers sales as well as full-service for cyclists of all skill levels. Additional restaurants, boutiques, shops, photography studios, recreation areas, and event spaces can be found throughout Chillicothe, making Ohio's first capital a great day-trip destination for visitors of all ages, abilities and interests.







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**INFRASTRUCTURE SPOTLIGHT**

A person's profile is visible on the left side of the page, looking out over a landscape. The background shows a body of water with a boat in the distance. The text is overlaid on this scene.

# LOOKING TO THE FUTURE OF CHILlicoTHE

**BY ASTI POWELL**

Local government isn't typically fast and exciting. Like most bureaucratic systems, changes can be slow and tedious. However, communities across the country are starting to explore how to better foster innovation and refocus back on the people of the community to drive decision-making, and Chillicothe has jumped on the opportunity to be one of these communities leading incredible progress over the last year.



Above the beloved Chillicothe Trolley making it's way down Second St. under the historic Majestic Theatre sign.

## **CHILICOTHE TRANSIT REDESIGNS SERVICE REACHING MORE PEOPLE THROUGH INNOVATIVE APPROACHES**

At the end of 2020, in the middle of a pandemic, Mayor Feeney led a team of city staff through a nine month program referred to as the Innovation Track. The program focused on teaching cities about human-centric design thinking, the art of engaging residents with identifying problems and solutions, and learning to not be afraid to test ideas as a way to fail forward.

The City of Chillicothe chose the transit department to focus its efforts during the program. As one of the only rural cities in Ohio to have a designated tax to support transit, Mayor Feeney saw an opportunity to improve the current transit system for those that depend on it and expand operations to reach individuals who utilize a personal vehicle as their main form of transportation. Over the nine-month program, the City's team representing many different departments and staff from front-line workers to the Mayor, focused on improving the transit system.

The result was a complete redesign of the transit system in 2022. Chillicothe Transit moved from a fixed-route-only system, to a combination of modified fixed-routes that run more frequently (30 minutes vs an

hour), a new on-demand service that provided uber-like point-to-point transportation throughout the city, and a trackless trolley!

In its first year, on-demand service has been able to help seniors age in place and maintain the freedom to get to the doctor or grocery store, get employees to work, and provide visitors an easy way to navigate the city and get form the local hotels to and from Downtown for dinner and shopping.

One young mother needed to drop her child off once childcare opened but still get to work on time. The old fixed-route system wouldn't allow her to meet both time constraints, but the new on-demand system ensures her child has access to early childhood learning and she is able to return to work, without paying a large portion of her paycheck to private transportation.

While succeeding on our reasoning behind the trolley, we've seen additional unintended positive uses develop. Local businesses have seen the excitement the Trolley brings to the atmosphere and used it in promotions to their place of business for visitors across the region. Others have viewed the trolley as a part of the solution to parking congestion.



My favorite unintended consequence is that some in the community have shared that the trolley provides one of the few free activities for families of all ages to connect with. Being able to engage youth and families to see public transit as fun and exciting begins to shift the mindset of how we view public transit. Through innovation and creativity, we've been able to look at our existing resources at transit and provide a free activity that ALL residents can engage with. Something that wouldn't have been possible, without inviting the community in to help us solve how to make our Chillicothe Transit better.

### **CHOOSE CHILLICOTHE – THE CITY'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN 73 YEARS!**

Following the success of the transit redesign, the City took the lessons learned and moved forward with a community-led comprehensive planning process, Choose Chillicothe. Most cities the size of Chillicothe regularly undergo a planning process to drive development and growth in an organized manner across stakeholders, but the last comprehensive plan done by Chillicothe was the year the Volkswagen Beetle came out!

The plan was timely, not only because Chillicothe was long overdue, but because of the current environment of Chillicothe. The City of Chillicothe has experienced incredible redevelopment in the Downtown area over the last 10 years, a revitalization we want to continue to grow and expand to other areas of the city. Additionally, the community has officially gained a World Heritage inscription, which is expected to bring visitors from across the country to our community and could (should) further enhance our economic stability. While these incredible wins are enough reason to ensure alignment across the community through a comprehensive plan, it can't go without saying that there are also significant challenges that must be addressed and can only do so

through a coordinated and cohesive approach, such as housing.

The planning process kicked off with a call to the community to be a part of the Steering Committee. More than 100 applicants were received and a diverse group of 35 members was selected to lead the process. Learning from the Innovation Track, the City focused on engaging residents directly to hear more about their ideas for the future, what was working, and what problems existed that needed addressed. The engagement took place in person, virtually, among small groups led by steering committee members, and online through the Choose Chillicothe website. The result will end with a plan detailing more than 70 actions driving how the City advances towards the vision developed in the planning process: Chillicothe celebrates the city's history while striding forward, eagerly led by a community with culture, health, education, financial security, and quality of life. This plan was reviewed and recommended by the Planning Commission in 2023 and adopted by City Council shortly after in that same year.

### **THE LAUNCH OF ENGAGE CHILLICOTHE INCREASES ACCESS FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO ENGAGE WITH THE CITY'S DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND STAY UP TO DATE ON MAJOR PROJECTS**

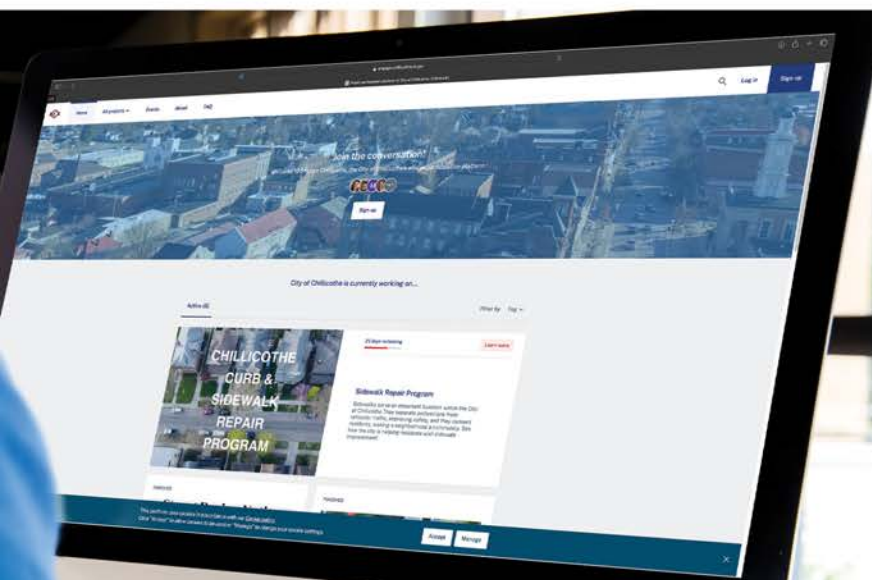
The success and excitement around the community being asked to be involved in the transit redesign and the comprehensive planning process is not something that could be ignored. Hearing from residents, even those that may be voicing frustration or identifying challenges has been encouraging and refreshing on a personal level. It reinforces the notion that Chillicothe is a community of people who care and want to make this city even greater. At the end of my conversations with residents, regardless the topic, the residents are always happy they had a chance to have a voice. Outside of establishing the desire from the community to be heard, it is clear the solutions are always better with public involvement than they would have been without. During the transit redesign, on-demand service was on my mind as a solution, but never once did I or would I have thought about introducing a trackless trolley to the community. But someone who cared about the future of our community and took the time to share offered that idea, and because we at the City were able to offer a landing place for that idea to grow and morph, the Chillicothe Trolley now may be the most loved part of our transit system.

In an effort to continue this engagement and participation, the City launched an online engagement platform at the end of this summer, Engage Chillicothe. The dashboard provides one location to share information about major projects in the city, provide

timelines and details, and engage community residents in providing feedback through a variety of ways including surveys, idea submission, mapping, and participatory budgeting activities. The dashboard launched with four initial projects, including asking the community how they would choose to allocate \$2 million of American Rescue Plan funds the city received with immediate engagement across the city. Additional projects are set to be launched in the coming weeks and the dashboard will continuously provide information on new projects and allow residents to track ongoing and major projects, such as the upcoming \$60M Wastewater Treatment Facility build.

Engage Chillicothe doesn't just provide input from the residents engaged, but provides the City data on who is or isn't responding as it relates to age, gender, socioeconomic status, and place of residence. This allows our team to further seek input from those groups often left behind through community engagement efforts in unique and concentrated ways. The online dashboard won't end in-person engagement opportunities, but instead, be just another avenue for the city to reach and connect with anyone who wants to participate in the decision-making.

The new online platform is just the next step as the City Administration remains committed to engaging residents as we look for new ways to grow and improve our community. I can't encourage the community enough to share their ideas and join conversations, because when community members are engaged, we only get better.



## JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Scan the QR code to join the conversation of the future of Chillicothe, Ohio. Engage Chillicothe is a page designed to keep the conversation going on what is best for our community and have access to speaking to individuals who make those decisions.



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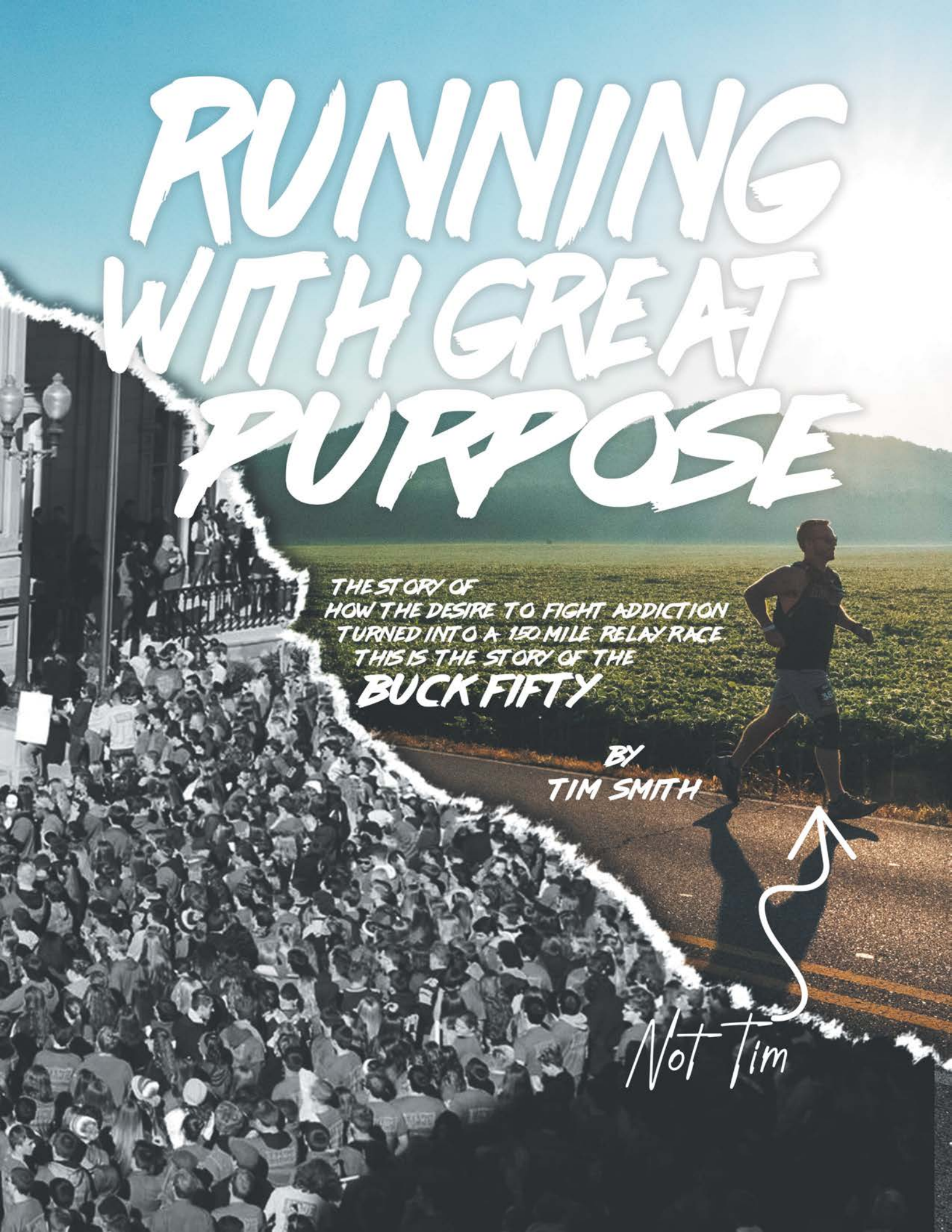


# RUNNING WITH GREAT PURPOSE

THE STORY OF  
HOW THE DESIRE TO FIGHT ADDICTION  
TURNED INTO A 150 MILE RELAY RACE  
THIS IS THE STORY OF THE  
**BUCK FIFTY**

BY  
TIM SMITH

Not Tim



I am scrubbing away at the remnants of this evening's spaghetti when my wife walks into the kitchen. "A few of my colleagues are doing the Buck Fifty this spring and asked me to do it with them," she says.

"Would you do it with me?" "I could tag along. What is it? A 3k? 5k?"

"Actually it's 150 miles, overnight, with a team. I think it supports our Drug-Free Program."

I turn off the water. "Hold on. Did you say **150 miles?**"

This colossal race starts and finishes in Chillicothe after weaving its way through Ross county. Teams of 10 people divide into two groups of five and a driver. Each runner tackles one of three five mile stretches before handing off to the next runner at the designated transition sites. Runners experience a plethora of terrain. State Parks like Hopewell, Great Seal, Scioto Trails, and Tar Hollow compose much of the 23 miles. The rest of the miles are spent on winding country roads and the charming towns of Ross County. This race kicks everyone's butt. Most runners come out of it proud and determined. But this race isn't just a random way we discovered to test our grit. The Buck Fifty, although a brilliant and massive collaboration of sport, team-building, and community, came to fruition from the need to sponsor large numbers of student registration in their local chapters of Drug Free Clubs of America.

I had a chance to send Dave Huggins, the current Race Director, some questions about the local chapter of DFCA and how it correlates with the Buck Fifty.

### **CAN YOU DISCUSS SOME OF THE REASONS FOR OPENING THE DFCA CHAPTER AND STARTING THE BUCK FIFTY?**

**DH:** In 2015, we began to learn more about the drug epidemic facing America. We learned about how it didn't discriminate and how powerful these drugs could be in taking over their lives. We also learned about Drug Free Clubs of America. It was a positive, peer driven drug prevention model geared towards teens.

If a student never takes a drug, they never have to worry about the harmful effects. This program was very robust and had many important elements. Students volunteered to join, so this program was not being pushed on anyone. The volunteer aspect also made it available to every student, not just athletes. The schools do not get the results, so there is nothing punitive about this program. Results are only given to the parents. This helps the schools to lead the program in a very positive way, and DFCA takes care of all the backend work. Students take an initial drug test to prove they are drug free, and they get a nice collection of treats that day in a bag with chips, cookies, suckers, candy bars, and other items. Once they pass, they get a photo ID Card which gives them perks at school and in the community. Many schools let their students in free to sporting events with their DFCA Photo ID Card. There is also an educational component where we give parents questions to help encourage them to have conversations with their children. Studies show that if a parent just talks to their student about drugs there is a 50% less likelihood that they will try them. The students are then subjected to random testing during the school year. This helps give them an out if they are ever offered any drugs by saying "I can't, I might get tested." We've even read stories from students who say that because they have signed up for DFCA no one even offers them drugs anymore because they see them at school being rewarded.

The bottom line is this. We will never get out of the drug problem our country has if these teens don't decide to do life differently than the generations before them. They CAN be the change, and we want to be there to support them all the way. We could also say that if we save just one kid's life, isn't it worth it? We now have dozen of kids who have come to us to tell us just that story and how DFCA has supported them."

After researching the DFCA and hearing Dave's information I began to wonder "but why a race for support?"



Dave Huggins  
Race Director of The Buck Fifty



**HOW MUCH MONETARY SUPPORT COMES FROM THE BUCK FIFTY FOR THE DFCA?**

**DH:** Almost all of it comes from The Buck Fifty. Since we started The Buck Fifty in 2016, we have invested \$684,566.48. We will add another hundred plus thousand to that this spring when we pay our 2022-2023 bills for the year.

**IS THAT ENOUGH TO FUND THE WHOLE PROGRAM?**

**DH:** We pay everything except for the \$10 per member per year that the students/families pay. We are actually a lot different than most fundraising events. Many events have a charitable component where they give a portion of their proceeds to very worthy causes. We are 100% responsible for these students in the 11 high schools we are currently supporting. The bill for them is sent to The Buck Fifty each spring. We are also different because we want that bill to be as high as possible, knowing we are supporting these teens to live a drug free lifestyle.

**DO YOU BELIEVE THE BUCK FIFTY WILL CONTINUE TO OPERATE AND GROW INDEFINITELY?**

**DH:** After working on this project since 2015, and as we approach our seventh Buck Fifty race, I feel we are just getting started! I believe that where there is passion, purpose, and a plan, you can

accomplish anything with God's help. This community of schools, businesses, and families have all shown how vital this program is, and supported us in extraordinary ways. It's the perfect circle of hope, love, help, trust, and hard work that makes it all go. Indefinitely is a long time, and I don't like to use the word never either, but if I was going to quit on this mission, I would have done it long ago.

I am tying up my running shoes for the first time in a while. The race is not for another few months, but I want to be ready. I want to show support for my wife. I want to help better this community that I have decided to call my home. The official Buck Fifty website has information and links regarding your local chapter of Drug Free Clubs of America if you want to learn more. The website even has a complete daily training program to whip us into shape for the big race. So come see all the crazy runners stumbling across the finish line on Saturday and help us kick this drug problem in the face.

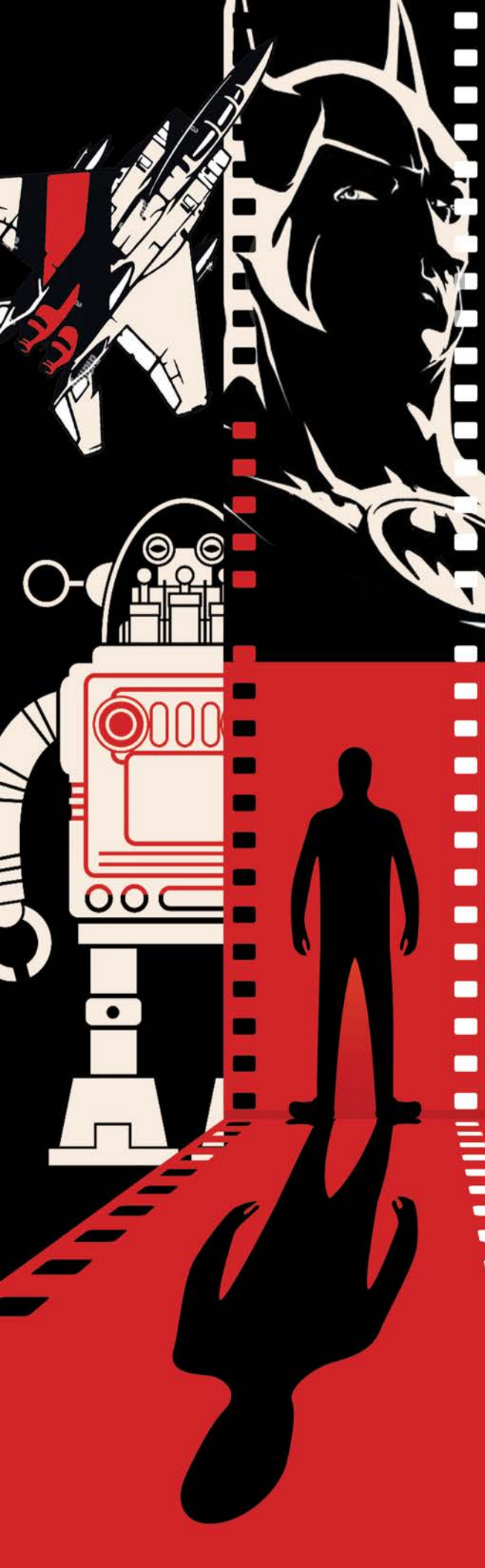




# BIG SCREEN SMALL BUSINESS

BY JARROD DePUGH





I love movies. Yes, I'm one of those people. I'm not loyal to one type. I love them all! Good movies, bad movies. I've seen my fair share.

The movie that started it all was Tim Burton's 1989 *Batman*, starring Michael Keaton. It was the first film that I can remember seeing multiple times in a theater. I fondly remember sitting in the dark, watching the flickering images dance across the screen and being completely immersed. The crowd around me, the smell of popcorn, the sound of the projector. I love movies, but more importantly, I love the experience that comes with seeing one at a theater.

There's just something about watching a movie on the big screen that doesn't compare to viewing it at home. It's about sharing an experience with the people around you. Laughing, crying, and cheering as the stories unfold right before our eyes. It's magic, plain and simple.

This was something I'll admit I took for granted until it was on the verge of being no more. It's no secret 2020 was a tough year for most businesses, but the theater industry was hit very hard. In Chillicothe, Danbarry Cinemas made the hard decision to close its doors for good. This meant that residents, who once had the choice of three fully operational theaters, were now unable to attend the movies locally. The Danbarry sat empty for a little over a year, as the world learned to adapt to a post pandemic life.

Enter Cora and Josh Willett.

"We didn't set out to be theater operators," Cora said when I asked how they got involved. To hear them tell it, it was all just chance that they now operate three theaters in Ohio (Danbarry Cinemas in Chillicothe, Ohio; Tri City Theatre in Jackson, Ohio; Silver Screen VII in Gallipolis, Ohio). "The owner of Tri City was heavily involved in the day to day running of the theater," Cora explained, "and he was looking to get out. He said, 'Cora why don't you try and run it.'" And that's how it all began. Josh, a band teacher with the Wellston School District at the time, helped where he could, as Cora took over ownership. Josh eventually left his teaching position and began to work full time alongside Cora. Then their ownership went from one theater to two when they acquired Silver Screen VII in Gallipolis.

"We were approached by Danbarry before the pandemic," Cora explained, "but the asking was too much for us to take on at the time. It just didn't make sense. They were a nice, family-owned company and wanted to stay family owned, which in the end might have been the reason they had to close." It wouldn't be until October of 2021 that they would be approached again with the proposition to take over the Chillicothe location. Seeing the potential, the Willetts started to research next steps.

"We really dug into what people locally were saying," Josh said with a smile, "there were a lot of complaints about the quality. We really wanted to make sure we took it all into account and we knew for this to work we would have to invest in some updates." Admittedly, neither are movie buffs but both understand the importance of the movie experience. "People want a better experience than they can get from their home," he went on to explain, "they just want to know they are getting their money's worth."

Since taking over operations, the couple has invested in all new digital laser projectors and state of the art sound systems throughout the 10-screen complex. "There was a lot of work to be done," said Cora, "there were speakers hooked up wrong and in mono, some of the speakers were just empty cabinets. You could see where the staff, to their credit, were trying to



along, rewiring and tweaking what they could.” In the end the Willetts decided that the best way to create a true theater experience for Chillicothe would be to rebuild the optics and sound from the ground up. And that’s what they did!

“We are lucky to have some good contacts,” and according to Josh, “because of our work with the other theaters, we were able to get things set up correctly by professionals who still come yearly to recalibrate the projectors and sound.” As they walked me around one of the screening areas and showed me the work that went into the remodel, I could see and feel the sense of pride they both share for the work they’ve put into the Danbarry.

The Willett’s passion for community is the driving force behind the work they do. They describe their staff of 20 employees as family, and smile as they talk about day-to-day operations. Both are big believers in never asking anyone to do something you’re not willing to do yourself. It’s not unusual to see either Josh or Cora pushing a broom or working the concession stand. In fact, even their 16-year-old twin daughters, Ella and Lea, work at the Jackson location, making it a true family affair.

Not all the changes made to the Danbarry have been technical. There have also been operational changes. Some of these include how the movie times are listed, the website update, and the decision, which I can truly appreciate, to make the popcorn fresh, daily. It’s these little changes that they hope the community will notice.

The big screen is back in Chillicothe thanks to the Willetts. Bigger and better than ever!



# DANBARRY Cinemas

For more information about Danbarry Cinemas including showtimes please scan the QR code to visit their website.  
[danberry.com](http://danberry.com)



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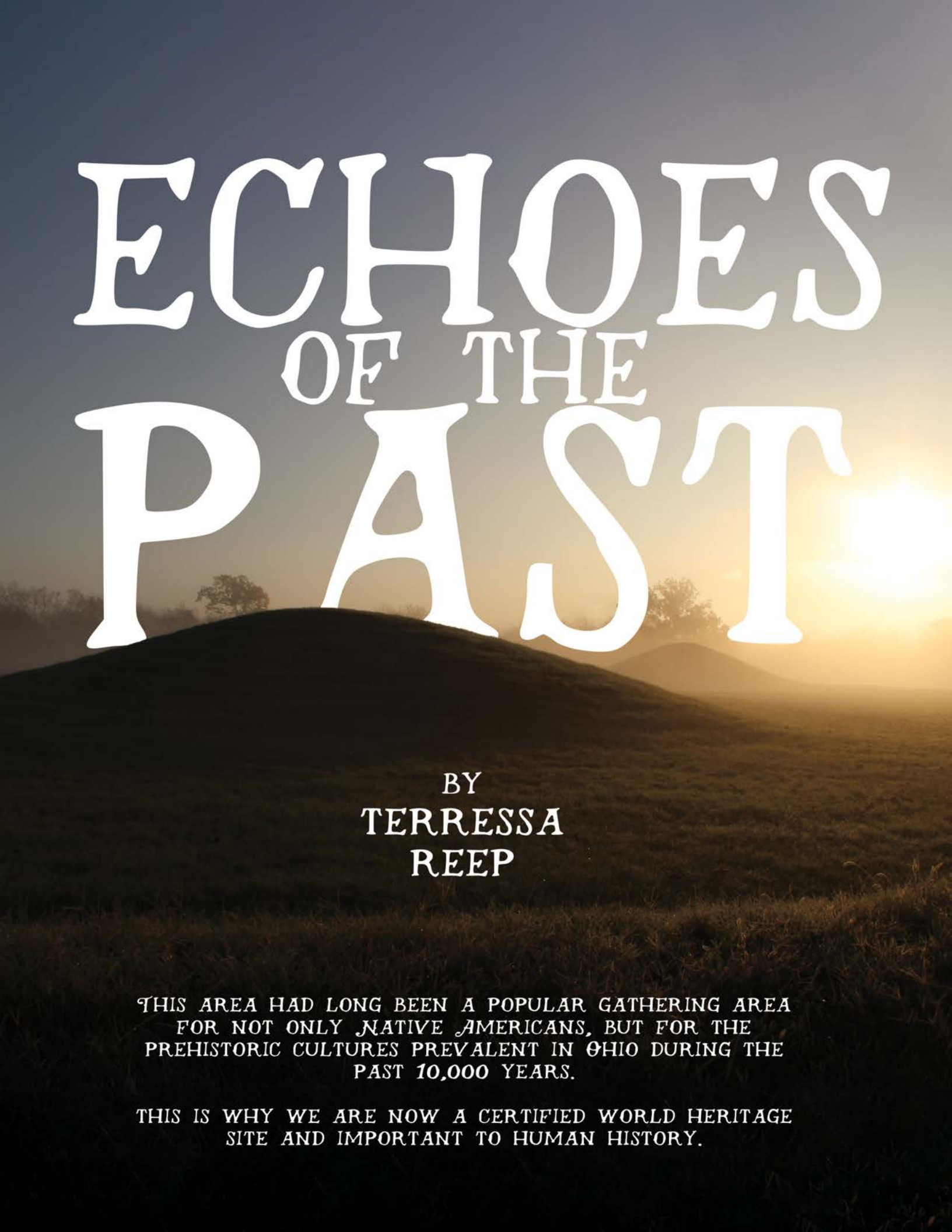
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# ECHOES OF THE PAST

BY  
TERRESSA  
REEP

THIS AREA HAD LONG BEEN A POPULAR GATHERING AREA  
FOR NOT ONLY NATIVE AMERICANS, BUT FOR THE  
PREHISTORIC CULTURES PREVALENT IN OHIO DURING THE  
PAST 10,000 YEARS.

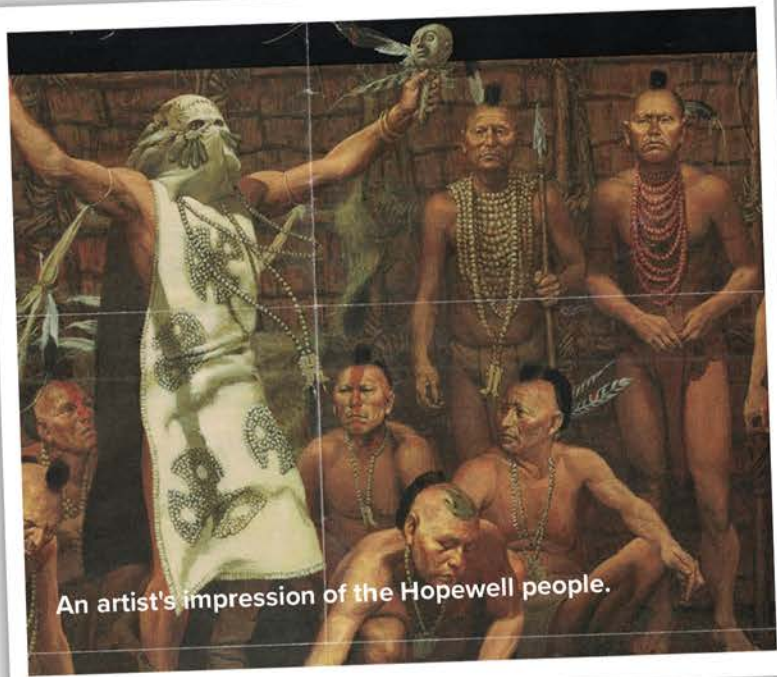
THIS IS WHY WE ARE NOW A CERTIFIED WORLD HERITAGE  
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Who are the Hopewell? Where and how did they live? And why did they build the largest concentration of prehistoric mounds in the world in Southern Ohio? The answers to these questions are known and documented by expert archaeologists and historians. American Indians of the Adena culture are the ancestors of the people of the Scioto Hopewell culture, and their descendants continued to live in the land we call Ohio, creating new and different material cultures. The earliest evidence discovered about these people in Ohio are their spearheads, found near the remains of long extinct animals, some dating to the Ice Age, 15,000 years ago.

Hardwood forests and inland waterways replaced the pine forests and tundra left by the glaciers in Eastern North America, around 8000 BCE. A culture dependent upon the flora and fauna of the land developed, creating what has become known as the Archaic era. The formerly nomadic people began to establish small semi-permanent living communities and growing some of their food supply by 800 BCE, thus becoming the Woodland Period and the Adena culture named after the estate of Ohio's first senator and third governor, where the first artifacts were found in 1906, including the Adena pipe.

The Adena culture remained until around 100 CE, when the creation of the first mounds took place in the Ohio Valley. Evidence exist of pottery, artifacts of copper and marine shells, and a settlement life style including ceremonies and deliberate agricultural practices. Thousands of mounds, ditches, and rings give proof to the formation of settlements and community living.

Before being destroyed by farming and development, there were over 600 Hopewell earthworks in the state of Ohio with over two dozen of the largest earthworks and mound centers located in Ross County today. The Hopewell were known for building geometric earthworks that enclosed hundreds of acres in circle, square and octagon shapes. Some of the mounds were used for burials, but many were not. Many of the significant earthworks are in alignment with the solar and lunar cycles, allowing, even today, a person to stand in a particular place in the earthwork and observe the sun or moon as it passes through various locations on the earthwork. The Scioto Hopewell, like the American Indians today, paid close attention to the movement of the sun and moon, planning ceremonies in conjunction with the changing positions of these objects in our solar system.



An artist's impression of the Hopewell people.

There were many groups of people populating the present day eastern half of the United States, and those that lived in South-central Ohio have become known as the Scioto Hopewell named for the land owner of the findings of mounds and artifacts in early excavations. The members of the Hopewell Culture continued the mound building creating more complex designs and architecture. There is no written history revealing the tribal or civilization names that the people called themselves or about their survival tactics , spiritual beliefs or cultural development. Only through careful archaeological research have we found that communities developed, crops were planted and value placed on specific objects.

The Hopewell Culture grew from the Adena and by the year 1CE, settlements were developing in the watersheds of what are now identified as the Scioto, Muskingum and Miami Rivers. Archaeologists have discovered that these earthworks were created as places of assembly, ceremony and burial. The mounds or any of the buildings contained with them were never used as living quarters by the Hopewell. The Hopewell mound building activity is centered in three major areas, the Upper Muskingum, the Great and Little Miami, and the Scioto and Paint Creek. The latter had the greatest concentration of major geometric earthworks encompassing what is now Circleville, Chillicothe, Portsmouth and the valleys of Paint Creek and North Fork Creek.

While the earlier Adena culture had built ceremonial gathering places for smaller communities, the Hopewell built large scale locations for large groups of people that traveled some distances to attend ceremonies and burials. Evidence points to the construction of large timber shrine buildings, that were later dismantled and carefully buried in mounds along with elaborate alters and burials and valuable artifacts. The findings of mica from North Carolina, obsidian from Wyoming, copper from Michigan and seashells from the Gulf of Mexico indicate that people traveled from distant places to gather in the Scioto Valley and that others traveled to those places returning with precious artifacts. There is no evidence of traded goods in above mentioned locations, thus further supporting the belief that the Scioto Valley was a place of great spiritual and ceremonial value to the Hopewell Culture.

It is believed that the people gathering in the Scioto Valley spoke many different languages yet had spiritual and cultural connections. From places as far away as Illinois, Southern Appalachian mountain tops and the Lower Mississippi Valley, similar objects have been found such as the motifs on locally made pottery, log-lined tombs and the bi-cymbal earpools.

The hunting, fishing, gathering people also developed pre-maize agriculture by clearing the forests for farmed plantings. They lived in small, year-round settlements and planted fields of seed-producing plants such as goosefoot, sunflower, knotweed, little barley, sumpweed, tobacco, little barley and maygrass.

It appears that the people lived in small communities linked by kinship and forming clans. Each community had ceremonial grounds and joint burials. Large, multi-chambered charnel houses served as burials for honored dead from throughout a region. Although some cultures throughout the world at the time of the Hopewell had a society of hierarchy that was passed through generations, there is no evidence that this system was present within the Hopewell culture.

Starting about 450 CE the people that built mounds in the Scioto River valley and beyond stopped constructing the elaborate complexes we see in the Hopewell Cultural period. Archaeologists are unclear of the exact reason mound complexes were no longer constructed, but it could be related to multiple social and environmental changes, including population growth and movement, a change in religious or social beliefs, availability of resources, or a combination of all these reasons and more.

We do know that the people that were part of the Hopewell culture continued to live in the region but choose to live a lifestyle that was more mobile. Throughout this period, people lived in small settlements only inhabited for a season or less. In addition to the

Indian peoples, maize or corn began to arrive in the area. Weapons changed as well; the bow-and-arrow was introduced, and large spear-points were abandoned in favor of small triangular arrow points such as Jack's Reef and Madison triangular points. Some people associated with these Late Woodland cultures (sometimes called "Jack's Reef Horizon" or "Intrusive Mound Culture") buried their dead in earlier Hopewell mounds. In fact, there are a few individuals from the Late Woodland period buried in Mound City! Some archeologists suggest these people may represent Native migrants from the north and east.

Groups of American Indians moved in and out of the land we call Ohio for thousands of years. Native nations living in and around southern Ohio in the 18th and 19th centuries included the Delaware, Miami, Seneca-Cayuga, Ottawa, Piankeshaw, Shawnee, Osage and Wyandotte tribes. Each nation has their own unique history but, along with other American Indian tribes, they acted as stewards of the land and monuments built by the people of the Scioto Hopewell culture. As Europeans began to move west of the mountains, into the new frontier, the indigenous people suffered from many new diseases. Within a few decades, 80% of the original inhabitants had died.



The Scioto Valley was primarily unsettled in the late 1780s when Francois-Rene Vicomte de Chateaubriand mentioned the discovery of the “extraordinary monuments on the banks of the rivers. In 1772, David McClure wrote, “...very ancient artificial works, for the present inhabitants can give no account of the builders...” Caleb Atwater, from Circleville, began systematic documentation of the mounds by mapping and describing mounds within the Ohio Valley region. Atwater’s research was published by the American Antiquities Society (founded in 1812) in 1820. Early American statesmen, among them Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, were interested in the Ohio earthworks and protecting them from destruction. By the mid 1800’s, spiked by the work of Ephraim Squire and Dr. Edwin Davis, the American public became interested in the mounds. Their work was published by the newly opened Smithsonian Institute in 1848. Since that time, many archaeologists and amateur collectors have discovered thousands of mounds, spearheads, burial artifacts, etc. New technology has led to the discovery and conclusion of the life styles of the ancient people.

The Hopewell Culture National Historical Park Visitor Center is located at 16062 State Route 104; Chillicothe, OH and is the most internationally significant historical site in Ross County. Mound City was named a National Monument in 1923 by President Warren G. Harding and became a National Historical Park in 1992, with a name change to the Hopewell Culture National Historic Park. It is the only fully restored Hopewell earthwork complex in the world.

The Mound City Group of earthworks contains 25 mounds in an area larger than 10 football fields, yet it represents one of the smaller complexes that once could be found in Ohio. There is no evidence that the Hopewell lived within the enclosure full time. No remains of collections of living quarters of more than three families have been discovered, although many families could cover a larger area along waterways. Mound City was a sacred place where many ceremonies, religious and social, were conducted.

When the ceremony was a funeral, a cremation occurred and the ashes were entombed on the floor of the building beneath a small mound of clay. Nearly 100 cremated remains were found at Mound City. At some point, the building was dismantled, and the mound building began with alternating layers of clay and sand. Finally, being covered with dirt.

When Squire and Davis first surveyed and drew maps of the Mound City location in 1846, it was covered in forest. It wasn’t long until this precious land was farmed as all the surrounding lands had been. The final blow came to the area when the US Government began construction of the World War 1 Camp Sherman. Only after WW I were archaeologist able to begin in earnest the work of exploring the destroyed site of the earthworks.

Today, the National Park Service is working very diligently with the modern American Indians whose tribal offices are far away from their once homeland in Ohio, to learn about the connections between the ancient Hopewell and their living descendants.

The Hopewell Culture National Historical Park is made up of five significant sites; The Mound City Group, The Hopeton Earthworks , Seip Earthworks , Hopewell Mound Group and the High Banks Works. Grounds at the Mound City Group Visitor Center site are open everyday from dusk to dawn and the visitor center from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. everyday except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s.

At the visitor center you can view an award winning video, interact with displays, browse the bookstore and view mica mirrors, ornamental copper regalia, and animal effigy pipes among other artifacts collected locally.

As you visit the Hopewell Culture NHP, keep in mind this is a sacred place and treat it with respect. Stroll within the enclosure among the mounds to experience what it would have been like 2000 years ago at a ceremonial gathering. Enjoy the peacefulness and the natural surroundings. Dr. Bret Ruby, lead archaeologist at the park, reminds us “the mounds we have here are on the same level as Stonehenge, The Great Wall of China and the Pyramids.” Right here in Ross County, OHIO!!



## Hopewell Culture

Historical National Park

### Sacred Spaces - A Place for Reflection in the Past and Today

Nearly 2000 years ago, American Indians built dozens of monumental mounds and earthen enclosures in southern Ohio. These earthwork complexes were ceremonial landscapes used for feasts, funerals, rituals, and rites of passage associated with an American Indian religious movement that swept over half the continent for almost 400 years. Come walk among the earthworks and experience the past.

The Future of Content?

# BRAVE NEW WORLD...

Article written by Chat GPT (AI)  
Intro by Jarrod DePugh (Human)

PRESS START!

You may have heard the term "AI Generated Content" a lot these days. With amazing advances in artificial intelligence both businesses large and small have found many useful marketing tools to generate copy with AI. With just little prompting it can generate everything from content for social media posts, essays and even full movie scripts. The tech is advancing at break neck speed working its way into most marketing tool kits. But as small businesses navigate this brave new world they should understand where it's appropriate to use it and be aware of the dangers of losing our personal branding, tone and relationships with our customers.

Would they even know the difference? We prompted the most popular of these online AI tools Chat GPT to write a 500 word article on the dangers of AI writing content. This is that article.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has made significant strides in recent years, with applications ranging from autonomous vehicles to virtual personal assistants. However, as AI technology advances, it is increasingly being used for writing articles. While there are benefits to using AI for content creation, there are also dangers that should be carefully considered.

One of the primary concerns with AI-generated content is the potential for bias. AI models are only as good as the data they are trained on, and if that data is biased, the resulting content will be biased as well. This can have serious implications in areas such as news reporting or political commentary, where accuracy and fairness are paramount.

Another danger of AI writing is the potential for plagiarism. While most AI content creation tools are designed to produce unique content, there have been instances of plagiarism where AI systems have pulled information directly from existing articles. This can lead to legal issues and reputational damage for both the author and the publisher.

AI-generated content can also lack the human touch that is necessary for effective communication. While AI can generate content quickly and efficiently, it often lacks the nuance and empathy that is necessary to connect with readers. Human writers are able to incorporate emotion, tone, and personality into their work, which can help to engage and persuade their audience.

Perhaps the most significant danger of AI writing is the potential for misuse. While AI writing can be a powerful tool for businesses and marketers, it can also be used to spread misinformation, propaganda, and hate speech. AI-generated content can be used to manipulate public opinion, sow discord, and even incite violence.

As AI writing technology advances, the potential for these dangers to become more widespread and severe increases. For example, there are now AI models that



are capable of generating text that is indistinguishable from that written by a human. This raises concerns about the potential for AI-generated content to be used to create deepfakes, fake news, and other forms of digital manipulation.

Despite these dangers, there are some potential benefits to using AI for content creation. AI-generated content can be faster, more accurate, and more cost-effective than human-written content. It can also be used to generate content in multiple languages or to create content on a massive scale.

However, it is important for businesses and individuals to carefully consider the potential risks before adopting AI writing technology. This includes ensuring that the AI system is trained on unbiased data, monitoring the content for plagiarism and accuracy, and carefully reviewing the output for tone and style.

In addition, there are steps that can be taken to mitigate the dangers of AI writing. For example, human editors can review and approve AI-generated content before it is published, ensuring that it is accurate, fair, and appropriate for the audience. AI systems can also be designed to include ethical considerations, such as avoiding hate speech or offensive content.

In conclusion, the dangers of AI writing are significant and should not be ignored. Bias, plagiarism, lack of empathy, and misuse are just a few of the potential risks associated with AI-generated content. However, there are also potential benefits to using AI for content creation, and with careful consideration and oversight, these benefits can be realized while minimizing the risks. As AI technology continues to evolve, it will be increasingly important to ensure that it is used responsibly and ethically.





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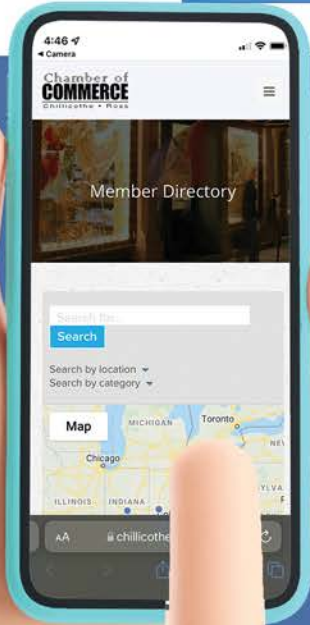


# BRINGING THE PIECES TOGETHER FOR YOUR BUSINESS

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU.



The Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce is here to help your business grow and succeed! Being a investor gets you access to our network of members, resources, and events that are designed to help your business grow!



## MEMBER DIRECTORY

Scan the QR code for to access our searchable directory of members!

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**MARK B.**  
Spinal fusion  
patient



As a middle school principal, basketball coach and dad, Mark dedicates his life to educating the next generation. When pain got in his way, he chose the advanced treatment options at the Adena Orthopedic and Spine Institute. Now he's pain free and back to doing what matters most to him. See more of Mark's story at [Adena.org/AOSI](https://Adena.org/AOSI).