

PROGRESS

2018



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Urbana

DAILY CITIZEN

Urbana City Schools completes new high school

By Justin Miller
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It's been a long time coming, but Urbana City Schools finally has new buildings. The high school was completed in late March and occupied on April 10. The pre-kindergarten through eighth grade building is scheduled to be completed in the fall.

"We've tried since 1974 to get new buildings. That was the first bond issue that was put up - to put a new middle school up. It's been 40 years. It was time to do it. Nobody was going to do it for us. Our percentage (of funding) from the state had increased, which meant that our relative position in economic viability and value in the state had decreased - that's what that means," UCS Superintendent Charles Thiel said. "I often wondered back in 2006, when we had an elementary bond issue up and it didn't pass, maybe that would have changed things. It would have come into effect right during the recession, and I've always thought that the school can serve as an economic engine for the community. It can help infuse other investments."

Many residents have been reticent about the issue, though the community's reservations were apparent after multiple attempts to pass a bond issue in that 40 years were unsuccessful. Finally, the issue passed in November 2014, by a 55-45 margin.

"It's going to be all good once people get



Urbana City Schools Superintendent Charles Thiel shows off the districts new hallways, which double as collaboration space between learning studios, allowing teachers and students to spread out and work on the district's project-based curriculum.



The new Urbana High School was occupied on April 10.

in and see it. I've been surprised at how many people have been happy about it - older people. They don't have kids that attend here. They're just happy. So many people say 'I never thought I'd see this in my lifetime,'" Thiel said.

The high school, a \$25 million marvel, will house students for the remainder of this school year while the eighth grade gets moved to the old high school. This will allow crews to continue

demolition of the old building and construction of parking areas for the new facility.

"We've got five weeks that we'll be in the building before the end of the school year," Thiel said.

The new building features a variety of upgraded technology over the old school, as well as spaces more suited to the project-based education that Urbana offers at the high school level.

The learning studios - "classroom" is out-

dated now - feature voice enhancement technology, LED panels, collapsible walls and garage door styled entrances. The hallways aren't just for walking - they have tables, chairs and podiums for extra work space.

The result is a space that can be opened up for multi-class collaboration, hallways that can be used for extended learning and teachers that don't have to shout to be heard, even across the double-long open space.



The new lunch service area was all set up for students' first day in the new Urbana High School on Tuesday, April 10.



Katie deNijs lectures her class during a morning English period at the new Urbana High School on April 10 - the first day in the new building.



Urbana City Schools' Cassie Cress (left) works with her students to direct their final group projects of the year on April 10.

"It's not going to be really used as a classroom, but it could be. It can be a teaching and learning space where kids can come from the learning studio with the garage door and open that up," Thiel said. "We're doing a lot more project-based instruction where the kids are working in groups and the teacher is just kinda going around and facilitating what is happening. The idea is to

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Gentle Care Health Center celebrates 10 years

By Christopher Selmek
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MECHANICSBURG - Gentle Care Health Center celebrated its 10-year anniversary on Jan. 2 at the clinic, 15 N. Main St. The women's health clinic specializes in gynecology. Services include wellness visits, family planning, PMS and menopause issues and sports physicals for females ages 10 and up.

Owner Ellen C. Spinner has a Master of Science from Ohio State University and has been a certified women's health nurse practitioner for 20 years. She said it had been her dream to own her own practice.

"Being independent just means that everything I do has a quality level that I am pleased with," she said. "That's not to say that I didn't have that when I worked for other providers as well, but this affords me the blessing of being able to think through every decision, to make sure it's not only clinically appropriate but ethically appropriate professionally where I want to be. Personally, the schedule I can adjust. If a patient needs to see me at 7 in the morning for some extenuating circumstance, I can say 'yes, I have the keys, I'll be there, I'll let you in.' It just gives me a lot more flexibility to own it myself."

Patients

Spinner estimates that she has 3,000 to 4,000 patients, all women, some who use her as a primary care provider and some who use her as a specialty gynecology provider. "My certification is as a women's health nurse practitioner, so as an NP, legally, I see only women," she said. "Now the cool thing, and what I've done more of here in the last 10 years as opposed to when I worked in Columbus, is in Columbus I saw only GYN visits. Here, because there's such a need for primary care, I use my scope of practice more fully. So in a given day probably 50-60 percent of my exams are GYN-related, and that can be anything from your annual pap smear to a breast mass or dysfunctional periods, things like that. But then 40-50 percent of my visits would be primary care like blood pressure medication, drawing cholesterol levels, treating thyroid problems, sports physicals and those kinds of things. So I get a lot more variety here than I



From left are Gentle Care Administrative Assistant Darcy Ritchason, owner Ellen C. Spinner and Medical Assistant Treana Tom in the entryway of the women's clinic in Mechanicsburg.

had in Columbus." While she sees many residents of Mechanicsburg, Spinner says that she gets many patients who visit her twice a year from Toledo, Columbus and Cincinnati to obtain specialty bio-identical hormones.

"That's a very cool niche that I have a comfort and expertise with," she said. "There are many women like that who live far away and have a primary care person who takes care of all their general needs, but come here for specialty bio-identical hormones. Hormone replacement therapy is something that many women choose to have when they're going through menopause. Not every woman needs it, but some do, and many prefer bio-identical hormones rather than synthetic hormones. That's a bit of a sub-specialty that not every GYN provider is comfortable doing, but it's something I learned in Columbus when I worked there and have a great comfort level with."

Others simply want someone to talk to, and say that it's easy to interact with Spinner and get answers to their questions. "Sometimes people are surprised at the detail of the questions we go through and discuss," she said. "Sometimes they're a little surprised and pleased with the time that we spend talking

about their symptoms, and then the effort we put into trying to customize something that will work for them - whether it's their hormones or their thyroid or what have you. Once they get a comfort level here, or once they've found a treatment that works really well for them, it's worth it to come here a couple of times a year."

Miss Ohio

Spinner received her bachelor's in nursing from Ohio State in 1994, the same year she was asked to compete in the Miss Portsmouth beauty pageant close to the village of Otway where she grew up. She was home working for the summer when somebody called her from the Miss Portsmouth contest and noted she played the piano in church. Because the winner was paid in scholarships, and the contest was weighted heavily in the talent and personal interview portions of the contest, she decided to give it a try. Winning obligated her to compete in the Miss Ohio competition, which she won in 1995. Afterward she embarked on a public speaking circuit to prepare for being a Miss America contestant. During her year off from being a nurse she met her future husband, Scott, who is originally from Cleveland and works in marketing and management for medical sales.

When she returned to nursing, she said, she and her husband lived in a modest condo in Gahanna while looking for land across the state. Spinner was working for a private OB/GYN in Columbus, but said that he was well aware of her dream and helped her learn some aspects of business management. Eventually the couple found a vacant plot in Mechanicsburg, decided they loved the area after staying one night and visiting St. Michael's Catholic Church. It took several years to collect money to build the house, but they have now lived in Mechanicsburg about 13 years and say that it feels like home.

Starting the business

Spinner said the building housing Gentle Care, which had been for rent when they drove through the village the first time, is the oldest business building in Mechanicsburg. Prior to being a clinic, it was a funeral home, furniture store, tavern and a children's clothing store. Spinner and her husband recently purchased the building she works in and they lease space to other tenants. The clinic includes two exam rooms, one that is handicapped accessible, and a consultation room. "One of the biggest changes was to comply with federal regulations

and get an electronic health record," Spinner said. "That has been a process, and now we put everything in electronically. We do our scheduling electronically. We interface with the lab electronically, so that gives us results much quicker. It puts us in full compliance with the government's requirements for medical practices, and it makes for a more seamless care for the patient."

Spinner credits God for providing the right people to hire onto her staff over the years. When Gentle Care first opened, Spinner hired a billing firm to handle the financial aspects of the business. In 2011 Spinner hired Darcy Ritchason as an administrative assistant, who had previous experience working with billing software and quickly became acquainted with the billing side of the electronic health records.

Treana Tom was hired as a medical assistant in 2015. Spinner and Tom had been friends and their children attended the same school. The position opened at a time that Tom was considering returning to work as a nurse.

Spinner said her team works together well now and that she was excited to see them grow together as they settled into their jobs. "Managing staff has been more difficult than I thought it would be," she said. "I never really needed to manage before now. So managing staff, figuring out payroll rules, doing staff evaluations, that part has been tricky, but I have enjoyed learning it. There's also more time involved outside of office hours. There's more charting and documenting that I do after I see patients. At the end

of the day I feel great about what I've done, but there's usually two or three or four more hours of documentation that I need to do."

The future

Spinner said she likes her practice just the way it is now, although her husband is always pushing her to get bigger and see more people. Now that they own the building, she speculates that if any of the current renters move out they may have an opportunity to invite another doctor to join their practice, possibly someone who could see men or children, and that would serve the community better. "This really just flows with where I am as a human being in my life, and so it's helpful for me to be able to serve women and I try to lead by example," she said. "Right now the biggest challenge for me, at 45 years old in the job that I've always dreamed of, with a husband I've dreamed of and a life that's blessed beyond belief, is just finding balance. I have two amazing kids in high school who are very busy in the arts and sports and academics, so it's a good opportunity for me to practice what I preach - to find a way to make this business fruitful, pay the bills, pay my staff, serve patients, be (who) God has ordained me to be and still not go crazy as a mom, still cook some home-cooked meals sometimes. So being pushed to try to find a healthy way to do that helps me serve people better." For more information about Gentle Care, visit www.gentlecarehealth-center.com or call 937-834-5320.

Christopher Selmek can be reached at 937-508-2304

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Champaign Transit System relocates

By Nick Walton
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The Champaign County Transit System (CTS) relocated last year from their previous operations on Miami Street allowing for more space and a new storage garage.

CTS provides transportation to all Champaign County citizens who are in need of mobility to health care, public services, shopping, jobs and any other transportation needs.

CTS Director Gary Ledford said last year CTS made 27,920 trips covering 221,526 miles transporting residents of Champaign County.

For many years, CTS shared a building on Miami Street with the Champaign County Sheriff's Office and Caring Kitchen meaning a lack of space was often a problem.

"We just caused a congested mess with our 12 vehicles and 12 drivers," Ledford said. "Everyday it was just a hassle for everybody up there. We'd have to get people to move their vehicles when we'd bring the vans back in or try to get them out – we were always in somebody's way."

Another problem for CTS was small garage space which Ledford said had too narrow of garage doors and also limited the kind of vehicles which could be purchased.

An alternative which created another set of challenges was when the vehicles would sometimes be parked at the county building. Ledford said this meant a driver would have to drive to the community center to pick up



The daily operations of CTS are now conducted within the community center in space previously used by the Madison-Champaign Educational Service Center.

the CTS vehicle and then drive back to the Miami Street office.

Ledford said county commissioners informed him in early 2017 that CTS would move to the county building, 1512 S. U.S. Highway 68, and receive a new garage.

Champaign County Commissioner Steve Hess said the idea to move CTS started a few years ago as the county was trying to figure out a way to provide more space for the sheriff's office to store evidence.

Hess credited Merle Gregg, maintenance supervisor for the county, for coming up with the idea to construct a building for CTS and let the sheriff's office utilize space CTS used on Miami Street.

CTS now operates in the community center in space previously used by the Madison-Champaign

Educational Service Center. Not far from their new offices is the new garage facility.

Champaign County Commissioner Bob Corbett said the cost of the new garage facility was around \$500,000.

While the old garage space was limited with dividers between each door, Ledford said the new garage facility is completely open allowing for multiple vehicles to be parked inside at once.

A separate space in the facility houses a wash bay used to clean the vehicles. While the old location also had a wash bay, Ledford said the area was too small to wash bigger vehicles.

Ledford said CTS started operating in their new location in September 2017. He said the new location is more efficient for travel purposes.

"As far as the parking,

as far as getting guys out of here," Ledford said. "When you have to go clear across town to go to Springfield, we're a lot closer to Springfield, we're closer to get to the highway to get to Columbus, Dayton."

As part of the transition to the new location, Ledford said the hardest part involved radios used to communicate with drivers. CTS used to utilize a tower located near the Spotted Cow Coffeehouse on North Main Street since CTS' inception.

Ledford said the Champaign Countywide Communication Center allowed for new radio equipment to be put on their tower and commissioners purchased new radios for CTS. The total cost for the CTS



As part of their move to the community center, the Champaign Transit System received a new garage facility allowing for multiple vehicles to be stored in a garage larger than at CTS' previous location.



CTS previously was located on Miami Street - sharing space with the Champaign County Sheriff's Office and the Caring Kitchen.

radios and towers was \$31,136.88 according to information provided by county commissioner bookkeeper Robin Ferryman.

Ledford said the new radios provide better reception throughout the various parts of the county.

"You could hear in town, not in Mechanicsburg, not in North Lewisburg, kind of in St. Paris, no way in Springfield," Ledford said of previous reception. "It sounds like they're here when they call now."

Ledford said the addition of the new garage gives CTS flexibility for

the future if additional vehicles are purchased.

"If the commissioners and our board decide that we want to expand vehicles now we have the space to do so without having to worry about parking them outside or parking them at another location," Ledford said. "We have the opportunity to have them right here."

Hess said currently CTS vehicles are housed in the garage but noted the facility was built with the potential to place county vehicles to be placed there.

Nick Walton can be reached at 937-652-1331 Ext. 1777 or on Twitter @UDCWalton.



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Mercy Health continues tradition of local care

Submitted story

Editor’s note: *Earlier this year, it was announced that Mercy Health and Bon Secours Health System would merge by year’s end. Both are Catholic health ministries. Bon Secours Health System serves the East Coast, and Mercy Health serves Ohio and Kentucky.*

In 2016, Mercy Health served Champaign County residents through Mercy Memorial Hospital and two other points of care, Mercy McAuley Center and Mercy Occupational Health and Medicine. Based on expenditure data provided by Mercy Health, this report examines the economic impacts and related benefits of these healthcare points of care on Champaign County.

The \$25.9 million in operating expenditures made by Mercy Health’s three Urbana points of care in 2016 generated a total economic output of \$31.6 million.

The operations impact of Mercy Health - Urbana also included:

- \$15.3 million in total household earnings
- A total employment impact of 318 jobs, 247 of which are Mercy Health — Urbana employees

To provide state-of-the-art healthcare for its patients, Mercy Health — Urbana also made investments in facilities and capital equipment.

Although there are fluctuations from year to year, Mercy Health made investments in the form



Submitted photos
John Wooten, OSU Telestroke Program, shows how technology enables Mercy Health – Urbana Hospital to communicate with Ohio State University during a stroke event. Wooten was illustrating how a doctor would be seen on the monitor.

of new construction and capital expenditures. By analyzing investments from the past three years, an average investment level during 2014–2016 was identified.

From 2014–2016, Mercy Health — Urbana spent an average of \$896,965 annually on construction and capital investments, which produced an economic output of \$1.0 million, including:

- \$182,101 in annual household earnings, on average
 - An average of three jobs annually due to capital expenditures
- Mercy Health — Urbana produced several other benefits in Champaign County, which include:
- An estimated \$844,764 in local sales, income and other tax revenue
 - \$8.4 million in uncompensated care and other

Continuing tradition of care

For more than 160 years, Mercy Health has been caring for patients and providing innovative healthcare services throughout Ohio. As the largest healthcare system in the state and the fifth largest employer, Mercy Health contributes to the local prosperity of communities by providing jobs and investments that make them better places to live.

Mercy Health once again partnered with the University of Cincinnati Economics Center to identify and report how it benefits the financial vitality of communities it serves across Ohio and Kentucky.

The report, compiled with full data from 2016, shows that:

Mercy Health contributed \$10.1 billion to the Ohio economy, up almost 13 percent from five years ago.

Its average capital expenditures of nearly \$400 million annually added more than 5,700 jobs and \$283 million in household earnings per year.

Mercy Health employees paid nearly \$257.8 million in sales, income and other tax revenue.

Counties Mercy Health serves include 33 percent of all Ohio residents (3.8 million people), making one of every three Ohio residents a past, present or potential Mercy Health patient.

“Mercy Health understands healthier communities are prosperous, vibrant places where people live, work and play in safety and security. We are honored to contribute to that prosperity of communities through jobs and investment that make Ohio a better place to live,” said John Starcher, president and CEO, Mercy Health.

Mercy Health’s impact in the Springfield region in 2016 was significant. Mercy Health’s 49 points of care and other facilities had operating expenses of \$247.3 million and generated a total economic output of \$352.3 million.

The 2016 operations impact of Mercy Health — Springfield also included:

- \$144.2 million in total household earnings
- A total employment impact of 3,337 jobs, 2,132 of which were Mercy Health employees

Investing in facilities, equipment

To provide state-of-the-art healthcare for its patients, Mercy Health — Springfield made investments in facilities and capital equipment investments in the form of new construction and capital expenditures. From 2014–2016, Mercy Health — Springfield spent an annual average of \$14.7 million on construction and capital investments, which produced an annual average economic output of \$20.9 million, including:

\$4.7 million in annual household earnings, on average

An average of 119 jobs annually due to capital expenditures

Mercy Health — Springfield also produced several other benefits resulting from its operations and capital expenditures in the Springfield service area, which include:

An estimated \$4.9 million in local sales,

income, property and other tax revenue

\$14.9 million in uncompensated care and other wellness benefits for the Springfield service area

“Mercy Health’s team is proud to provide top quality care to residents of Springfield, Urbana and surrounding communities in Clark and Champaign counties,” said Matt Caldwell, senior vice president and CEO, Mercy Health – Springfield. “As the economic impact report shows, our operations support our community in ways that extend beyond healthcare and include employment and direct investment in the region.”

Additionally, the economic impact shows that while Mercy Health employs more than 31,430 people in Ohio, those jobs supported more than 44,000 additional jobs. In the core counties of four of Mercy Health’s regions - Lorain, Lima, Youngstown and Springfield - Mercy Health is the largest employer. And in the other two regions, Mercy Health is among the top five employers.

“I want to thank all the men and women of Mercy Health who work every day in service to our patients. And thank you to all our patients and their families for choosing Mercy Health to care for you,” Starcher said.

Submitted by Mercy Health.

New

From page 2

be flexible with how we use the space.”

The hallways will also feature wobble chairs - small stools with a rounded bottom.

“If you feel like you want to sit down and wobble and move - for those kids that are hyper-active. The other thing you can do is just tilt it to change your posture and sit in different ways,” Thiel said.

Science rooms look familiar, with gas hook-ups and sinks throughout, including ADA-accessible sinks. There is a preparation room with a pass-through that includes a fume hood. The prep space has a dishwasher and cold storage, which can all be seen from the learning space, allowing chemi-

cals to be mixed and stored immediately. A grid on the floor of the physical science lab is in squared meters, so that the floor can be used as a measuring tool.

Even the business lab has its own flair, with an area for green screen and adjustable lighting for video production

The entire school is set up for that kind of flexibility. The cafeteria features both short and tall tables, both rounded and rectangular, along with booths and an outdoor patio area to eat. That will allow the school to reconfigure the dining area to suit a variety of needs. The industry-standard kitchen will be suited for any occasion, with Thiel proud to announce that an inspector called the kitchen “the nicest in the county.”

There’s also new multiple ability learning space that will allow the

district to reclaim their students with disabilities.

“We’re in a cooperative with the ESC. Currently, we send kids to Mechanicsburg and to Triad. We bus them there every day. They belong to us, but we just don’t have a room that’s adequate to service them. We have steps and stairs everywhere. It’s not a good feeling when you’ve got that setup,” Thiel said.

It seems the school is prepared to accommodate nearly any need a student may have, going so far as to install eco-friendly water fountains, bubblers in the music rooms for stressed vocal cords and private bathrooms for students uncomfortable using the public restrooms.

“We created private bathrooms. This is typically what would be the staff bathroom, but because of the transgen-

der issue and not knowing how that is going to shake out, we just converted it to a private bathroom that any student can use if they’re uncomfortable using the group restroom,” Thiel said.

The school will also feature a variety of accessibility and safety enhancements, including a card-key elevator, ADA-compliant sinks in every plumbed room, laminated glass windows, egress windows in every learning studio and magnetic locking doors with video intercom systems.

“Very few people in the district will have an exterior door key. There’s lots of exits, but very few entrances,” Thiel said, adding that entrances will automatically lock after students enter the building in the mornings. “You can come in, and then it will lock. Everything will lock down.

“All of the windows are the same. But upstairs, the rescue window is on (the opposite side). So if you had to, you could jump out. All of the exterior glass (on the first floor) is laminated. It doesn’t shatter. It’s really difficult to break through. It continues to flex and will crack, but it won’t shatter and give way. I want people to be able to get out. You give up a little bit of security to get the (ability to escape). I think that’s a good feature.”

Lights throughout the school are on motion sensors for energy efficiency and walls are framed, not blocks, allowing for cheaper and less complicated reconfiguration if desired in the future.

Thiel struggles to pick a favorite space, but admits the new teacher collaboration room has him excited.

“This is something

we’ve seen in other newer schools and the way they’ve got things configured. The idea is they can come in here and work together, plan, have meetings,” he said.

That socialization helps form relationships and reduce the feeling of isolation, leading to a more energized staff. Each of these work rooms offers 15 work spaces with telephones, locking cabinets, a copier, refrigerator, two microwaves and mail delivery. There will also be wheeled carts assigned to each educator, allowing them to transport their belongings between classes and the work area.

No matter which area ends up being the consensus favorite, the school should allow the district to service its students and the community for decades to come.

Reach Justin Miller at 652-1331 (ext. 1776) or on Twitter @UDC_Miller.

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Visitors find downtown Urbana businesses a pleasant walk

By Christopher Selmek
cselmek@aimmediamidwest.com

As Urbana residents begin to enjoy the warmer months of spring and early summer, visitors see this season as a good opportunity to explore the Monument Square District and its multiple local businesses. The *Urbana Daily Citizen* profiled seven of the most recently added businesses for anyone who may be interested in taking a walking tour of Urbana's ever-changing downtown.

Hemingway's Bookstore, Tea and Gifts - 121 Scioto St.

Gina Mokry hosted a "soft" opening for Hemingway's Bookstore, Tea and Gifts on March 3, and has a grand opening planned for sometime this spring. She and store manager Sarah Zerkle say plenty of visitors have been coming in, and they look forward to even more once they get the tea room set up.

"We aren't serving tea just yet, but that is certainly coming," said Mokry. "We want you to sit down, stay, and get lost in your adventures."

The bookstore includes both fiction and nonfiction, including children's books, military history, and many well-known writers. Mokry said that most of their books are half price or lower, and that while many of their books are older they are also able to order books for interested clientele. There are also a wide variety of small gifts available for purchase throughout the shop.

The winter hours for Hemingway's Bookstore are Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., but they will be expanding into springtime hours soon. Mokry said she is enjoying her retirement after many years spent selling antiques, and that she appreciates the Urbana community. She also hopes to expand the children's section soon.

The Studio & Fine Art Gallery - 119 Scioto St.

The Studio & Fine Arts Gallery was started one year ago in April by owners Patsy and Pat Thackery to be a regional cooperative of artists creating in a variety of media. Works of art are for sale at the gallery, and classes are available for adults and children.

Visitors interested in taking classes in clay, jewelry, painting, pen and ink, photography and more can sign up at the gallery. Thackery said that they usually wait until they have enough people signed up to schedule a class, then contact everyone who is interested. They are also working on setting up home-school classes.

Private openings will be



Carole Cowles, manager of Oxner's General Store



Tina Blakeman, owner of The Vintage Traveler



Gina Mokry, owner of Hemingway's Bookstore, Tea and Gifts

held by invitation as new works are completed by the artists. Gallery hours are Thursday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and by appointment. For more information, call 937-652-2787 or 937-408-3459.

Room 177, Let's Eat Cake - 117 Scioto St.

Tina Knotts opened "Let's Eat Cake" in September as an expansion of her already notable baking career.

"I have been a baker for many years and have baked out of my home, Cottage Industry, and outgrew my kitchen, so I was looking for space," she said. "I am from Champaign County and very familiar with the downtown, and find it very charming, and I felt like the type of bakery business that we wanted to offer would be a good fit for the downtown."

She still does all the baking herself, along with an assistant, and also has family members helping her on the weekends. Among her most popular cakes include the Wedding Cake White, Chocolate Chocolate, and in the

springtime many people ask for lemon and strawberry, which has real strawberries in the batter and frosting.

The store is open Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., but Knotts hopes to add Thursday at some point. They are also available for private parties, special events, and remain open for any downtown festivities.

Old Scioto House of Designs, The Rusty Brush - 114 Scioto St.

Kambe Mabry first opened Old Scioto House of Designs in 2013, where it remained for the first full year until she moved uptown. There, several businesses had the word "Scioto" in their name, so she added "The Rusty Brush" to hers because it was more memorable. As of last March she is back in her original location on Scioto Street.

Mabry has an interior design degree and worked in the field for 22 years before deciding to take her talents in another direction. She now buys furniture from auctions outside of town to sell in her shop as well as paint-



Christopher Selmek | Urbana Daily Citizen
Tina Knotts, owner of Let's Eat Cake



Polly Shonkwiler, owner of PB&J on Main



Kambe Mabry, owner of The Rusty Brush

ing furniture, refinishing cabinets and performing upholstery. She said that while she typically paints everything she gets, 90 percent of her work is custom.

Old Scioto House of Designs, The Rusty Brush is currently open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday and Saturday, but will be adding Thursdays in May. Customers may bring furniture by the store at any time they see her white truck out front, or they can call in advance, 937-206-3099.

Oxner's General Store - 15 Monument Square

Carole Cowles grew up in Cambridge, England, where she said the local businesses all work together to create a comfortable environment. She now manages Oxner's General Store since they relaunched in September 2017, and says she tries to create a similar feel for her visitors.

"It's an adventure," she said. "When you come in the door we want you to gather in the gathering room, make yourself a cup of coffee or a cup of tea, go down to 'man-tiques' and have a look at what you maybe could buy the man in your life. Or if you're a lady who likes doing a bit of handi-

work and likes some of the wood, or a butcher's block for the kitchen, there's something for everyone."

The store's website, oxnersurbana.com, features a hashtag telling viewers "your adventure awaits." Cowles said this is because they have something from every era, and many people who come in to browse or recognize an old item that their mother or grandma used. In addition to antiques and vintage items, they also carry lots of artwork, small glass items, and various treasures.

Oxner's is currently seeking another two vendors to enhance their collection, which covers two floors and includes everything on the website. The store is open from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and they are open every first Sunday for the Urbana Flea Market.

The Vintage Traveler - 122 Miami St.

Tina Blakeman and her husband opened The Vintage Traveler in October, but this is actually their third business venture in Urbana.

"We moved for an old home here in Urbana, so we fell in love with an old

house and then I was taking walks uptown, kind of doing the downtown thing, and before you know it I just had the bug like I just wanted to start something," she said. "We had Picker's Emporium down by Mayflowers, so it was there for a little bit but I really wanted to move uptown so I got in talks and actually bought Kaleidoscope, and now it's been one of those things where I just keep building."

The current store is a more intimate space and Blakeman works exclusively with consignors. She also enjoys keeping her own shop, which she says is the best way to keep customers coming back when they no longer feel like strangers after the first visit. Blakeman enjoys showing people older items that can be used for decorating modern homes.

"I believe every home could use a touch of vintage," she said. "A lot of people think of older stuff as grandma's stuff and I just think of it as an easy way to cozy up a room. The craftsmanship and artistry on some of these things that has lasted for 50 plus years is amazing."

The Vintage Traveler is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

PB&J on Main - 122 S. Main St.

PBJ&J on Main opened on March 3 at the location of a prior business, Huckleberry's, with a similar business model. The owners, who each lend an initial to the store's name, had previously been vendors at Huckleberry's and say that many of their current customers are familiar faces from the old store.

"A lot of our business has come from repeat people from when Huckleberry's was here," said owner Polly Shonkwiler. "They knew what the business was and so they've come back in and noticed we were doing the same thing. We have a little bit of everything - from furniture to small collectibles - it's just a variety of things, a wide range hopefully for everybody's interest."

The store currently has nine vendors and space available for more, as well as some consignment for individuals. Shonkwiler said that her brother, Bob, has been dealing with antiques and collectibles for at least 25 years and that she has been doing it for 10-12, so leasing this building felt like a good opportunity.

PBJ&J on Main is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., as well as the first Sunday of the month from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the flea market.

Christopher Selmek can be reached at 937-508-2304



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CCAWL planning to add classes, petting zoo

By Christopher Selmek
cselmek@aimmediamidwest.com

The Champaign County Animal Welfare League was created to establish and operate an animal preserve, pet cemetery, dog training facility and rehabilitation home for unwanted pets. In 2015 the organization purchased a 72-acre farm near Mutual at 3858 state Route 56, in accordance with the last will and testament of David Robert Wetzell. Later that year, a low-cost spay and neuter clinic opened on the property.

On Oct. 28, 2017, CCAWL hosted an open house so the public could tour the adoption facility with room for a kennel, pet grooming area, senior-dog center and indoor dog park. A membership program allows donors full access to the facility in exchange for their support of current and future services.

"I think a lot of people say that we are a \$3 million place so we don't need anything," said Executive Director Tiger Franks. "It wasn't quite \$3 million, but we purchased the property, we just built a \$1 million facility, and we had the clinic that we needed to do, so that is where we run into difficulty on being a nonprofit and running off of donations and grants and public support. We have a good public support right now from the people who know about us and come out and they like what we do. We're not in competition with anybody, we're totally something differ-



Christopher Selmek | Urbana Daily Citizen

Champaign County Animal Welfare League Executive Director Tiger Franks holds a cat at the adoption facility



This is a structure on the Champaign County Animal Welfare League campus.

ent from what you've seen rescues be in this area, and I'm not saying anything bad about anybody else. We were blessed enough to get this initial money to create this, and to keep it going we need the public support, grants and donations and we need people knowing we're out here."

Training

Franks said, at the time of this interview, about

30 members regularly use the indoor park, grooming facility and trails. Members receive invitations to all events hosted at the CCAWL campus and 10 percent off training classes.

According to Franks, trainer Carol Souza, after intense training at the Karen Pryor Academy, will instruct dog safety and basic pet manners courses, as well as agility courses for 4-H members.

Franks said she hopes to open a day camp by June, which will feature safety training and provide a fun field trip for schools. She has received requests to have birthday parties in one of the classrooms, but says that program is not yet ready because the first concern is the safety of the animals.

"Opening up membership is a huge deal," Franks said. "A lot of



Stanley, a silver fox, moves about his pen at the Champaign County Animal Welfare League campus.

people will join just to do the donation to help out a rescue, but I think once they see what we can do out here - that you can come out and spend the day and your dog can spend the day swimming in the dog park then get a bath, then go home clean and tired - and when they see the vast amount of property that's out here, we'll get a lot more members."

Petting zoo

Franks plans to double the size of the existing petting zoo, which at the time of this interview had two miniature donkeys, three goats, some fowl and a silver fox named Stanley. When complete, the entire space between the two buildings will be a fenced-in petting zoo. Franks plans to get another goat and a better caging area for Stanley.

Another plan is to build a Kitty City with miniature buildings for various cat needs. Franks said that plumbing and electric is ready to install

as soon as enough money
is donated for the Kitty
City.

"Kitty City is going to be an actual city," she said. "I grew up with Safety Town, and that's how we want to do it, with sheds that you can buy that are already constructed. We'll have a schoolhouse that will be for the kittens, a hospital for the sick, and a jail will be for those that need to be quarantined. Each building would have electricity and water, and the whole area would be encompassed by fencing so cats can't get out and nothing can get in."

Franks said that some people in their wills have said they want their cats to live at the CCAW campus without being adopted, while others have been unable to keep a pet when moving to assisted living. Because cats don't mingle as well with one another as do dogs, Franks said, she envisions separate buildings donated by families to house specific cats.

Franks said she hopes to have both projects started by this summer and is applying for grants to obtain fencing. She is also applying for a grant to make the front garden comfortable for bird watchers. In June, she is planning a large fundraiser to help provide the \$28,000 fence job surrounding the outdoor dog park.

To apply for a membership or for more information, visit champaignco-animalwelfareleague.com.

Christopher Selmek can be reached
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Q3 JMC Inc. property under development

City hopes to turn eyesore into economic boon

By Christopher Selmek
cselmek@aimmediamidwest.com

The former Q3 JMC Inc. property at 605 Miami St. in Urbana has not been used since 2008 when the company ceased manufacturing operations, but the city of Urbana is hopeful that after cleanup efforts it may find productive use again. In September 2017, Director of Administration Kerry Brugger announced at a city council meeting that an agreement had been finalized between the city and Urbana-based developer True Inspection Services,

which will direct redevelopment of the 20-acre site. The estimated two-year project will involve demolition, environmental remediation, asbestos abatement, removal and disposal of waste and site preparation. TIS was awarded a JobsOhio Redevelopment Pilot Program reimbursable grant of \$883,947 to perform this work. TIS Vice President Joe Timm said the company, as of March, was in the process of hiring contractors for the cleanup and demolition of several buildings damaged in a

2015 fire ruled an act of arson by the state Fire Marshal's Office. He said the company had taken down several buildings at the back, but plans to retain the brick front following cleanup and rehabilitation. Through a separate agreement with the city, Honeywell International Inc. is responsible for cleaning up groundwater contamination in an approximately four-acre section on the west side of the property, which Timm said he expects to see finished soon. Honeywell became liable for the former Grimes Aerospace



Christopher Selmek | Urbana Daily Citizen

Q3 JMC Inc. property is pictured recently.

Plastic Research Products contamination when it acquired the Grimes company. Brugger said that once cleanup is complete - and meets Ohio Environmental Protection Agency requirements - the title to

the property will transfer from the city to TIS. TIS will then prepare the site for development by a new owner while the Champaign Economic Partnership helps to market the property. "Having a 20-acre

greenfield in Urbana that is zoned M-1 for industrial use will be extremely advantageous for economic growth and job creation in our county," said CEP Director Marcia Bailey.

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Urbana Self Storage adds more units, parking

By Christopher Selmek
cselmek@aimmediamidwest.com

Urbana Self Storage, LLC, 1336 E. U.S. Route 36, completed a \$160,000 expansion October 2017, adding a 6,000-square-foot storage building as well as a large parking lot inside the security fence. The new parking lot has 25 spaces for RVs and campers. The new building was delivered on Oct. 5, 2017, by Trachte Building Systems, of Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, and was erected by Fountain Builders of Newaygo, Michigan.

This building was the 10th on site and contains 40 storage units of the most popular sizes: 10-by-20, 10-by-15 and 10-by-10, bringing the facility's total capacity to 258 units. According to owner Polly Long, the storage facility is currently 95 percent occupied and she has started a watch list, reserving units as far as a month before they become available.

"We've basically been full for three years," Long said at the time the new building was installed.



Urbana Self Storage owner Polly Long stands beside the packing center, which sells boxes, moving lights, bungee cords, mattress covers and other essentials a person may need when moving.

"It's going to serve the community because it's just horrible for me when someone is trying to move and they don't realize that they should check ahead. People just walk in and expect to get one right then when they should have been calling a month ahead, and they don't realize that everybody is full. All of the storage places here in town have been full, and we'll get one open here and there, but they rent almost the same day as they open, so there's

a real need for it in this area." Prices range from \$32 to \$129 for a 10-by-25 unit a month. The most popular size, 10-by-20, is as large as a garage and Long said all the new units of that size were rented within two weeks. "There's a real need because there's all kinds of different reasons why people rent storage units," she said. "A parent is moving into a nursing home and they don't want to let go of their property. That's a big one. So they



Photos by Christopher Selmek | Urbana Daily Citizen
Urbana Self Storage added a 6,000-square-foot storage building containing 40 storage units, bringing the facility's total capacity to 258 units.

rent a unit for a transition there. Obviously, people moving. And then, when we went through the foreclosure crisis in 2008, when everything crashed, then I had a bunch of homeless people because people were losing their homes. So during that period, we had a lot of people that had their whole life back here while they were moving in with family members.

"I have some long-term people back here who have been with us for 18, 19 years," she added.

Facility improvements

In addition to the new storage units, Long also worked with the city to obtain land for a fenced-in, lighted parking lot big

enough to contain over 22 campers. At the end of March there were four campers on the lot, but Long said she hopes to be full by summer.

"The problem for people with campers is there's a lot of city ordinances that you cannot park your camper out in front of your home," Long said. "So when we get to the end of the season, everyone who had camping sites for the summer now has to park their camper somewhere, and you're going to get a letter from the city if it's sitting out in front of your driveway."

Property at Urbana Self Storage is protected by dual-beam sensors and monitors, which will set

off an alarm if anyone tries to break in and hits either invisible beam, Long said. The system was installed by Tattletale portable alarm systems, based in Westerville, which recently added more monitors and motion sensors that trigger the silent alarm.

The company recently installed new financial software called Converge, which allows customers to pay electronically.

"We've been here since 1985 and we've been just a cash rental business, and cash rental is a business that takes business checks, personal checks, money orders and cash," said Long. "Well, we're coming to a new world

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Property

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Cooperation

Bailey added that bringing the project to this point has required the cooperation of many parties including the city, Honeywell, JobsOhio, the Dayton Development Coalition,

TIS, the CEP and the Champaign County Board of Revision, which in late 2016 approved transferring the property from the county to the city and directed the county auditor to cancel delinquent taxes on the property.

The city has been involved with the project to return the Q3 JMC site to

productive use since 2011, when it acquired a \$265,822 Clean Ohio Assistance Fund grant for an environmental assessment. When the study was completed in 2013, initial results showed redeveloping the site would be tedious and costly as it was contributing to volatile organic compound (VOC) contamination of

a local aquifer.

After receiving the property, city council agreed to fund the city's portion of the cleanup and redevelopment plan by approving a resolution authorizing commitment of the city funds as a match for grant funding for the Q3 Cleanup and Redevelopment Project. Brugger said the

commitment is for the city to invest an amount not to exceed \$350,000 over a three-year period.

"Over the life of the project, the grantor wants to make sure that the city is committed and that council is behind that commitment," Brugger told the council in December 2016. "It doesn't necessarily mean

we are going to spend \$348,000. It means we are going to spend it or we are going to do some of the work (engineering, zoning, building, site prep and clearing) on that behalf. Any of those things we can do in-house, we can charge back against our obligation."

Christopher Selmek can be reached at 937-508-2304

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Urbana University expands athletic vision

By Justin Miller
jmill@aimmediamidwest.com

After announcing the addition of a wrestling team to its athletic department in August 2017, Urbana University broke ground on a 10,000-square-foot wrestling facility in December 2017. The university hopes to complete the facility by the summer.

The facility will feature wall-to-wall mats, a weight room and a locker room and is another visible sign of Franklin University's commitment to growing the UU brand. The school has added acrobatics and tumbling, men's volleyball, and wrestling to its programs in the past year.

"Investments to the Urbana University campus not only benefit our current students, it benefits the larger, surrounding community. For area high schools students, these investments are part of our focus on providing the curriculum and athletic offerings that align with the needs and interests of the region and beyond," said Dr. Christopher Washington, executive vice president of the university. "This region has a strong and



This is an artist's computer rendering of what the new wrestling facility will look like at ground level.

Submitted graphics

historic reputation for athletic excellence, particularly in the area of wrestling. By adding wrestling to our list of teams, we provide area students with the opportunity to further their education without traveling across the country to do so. For the local and surrounding communities, our investments benefit area businesses through the increased traffic new students and their fami-

lies bring to area business. Current students benefit from these investments through the elevated student experience new academics, athletics and facilities bring to their overall growth and well-being."

In addition to adding teams, the university has made a few improvements to its facilities, including permanent lights and a new drainage system to its stadium, as well as a resur-

faced basketball court.

"Athletics is an opportunity to demonstrate excellence in the classroom, on the field, and in the community. Participation in athletic programs helps develop good habits of health and wellness, competitiveness and discipline. Its impact on the holistic university experience cannot be understated. Athletes learn teamwork and

individual accountability, and these behaviors follow them into their future to become successful businesspeople, teachers, civic leaders, etc.," Washington said. "Therefore, by expanding our athletic offerings and investment in our athletic facilities, we're helping to fulfill our responsibility as educators to create a well-trained, next generation of leaders.

"But I would be remiss if I didn't mention that it's not just the athletes who benefit. The sidelines of any sport have a valuable teaching component as well. Being on a team or on the sidelines in support of those teams builds community. Students shouting from the sidelines can be united in a common bond, creating a sense of community that is imperative to not only one's psychological growth, but in creating a sense of belonging and support."

With the steps taken in the past year at UU, the Blue Knights will likely be feeling a sense of pride for a long time as they sway back and forth to the fight song.

Reach Justin Miller at 652-1331 (ext. 1776) or on Twitter @UDC_Miller.

Adds

From page 9

now and Civista Bank came down here to set up encrypted software on our computers, and we can take electronic checks now, debit payments, and it can be reoccurring. I have had a lot of people sign up for that immediately."

Although there is an expense for the business

to accept these type of payments, Long said it was worth it because of the huge convenience for customers. No longer do customers need to physically visit the facility on the first of the month. Long said nearly everybody now sends electronic checks.

The office also added a packing center with boxes, moving lights, bungee cords, mattress covers and other essentials a person may need

when they get ready to move. Long said she is frequently visited by people looking for these items, even if they aren't regular customers, because they associate her business with moving.

Business history

Located on the east side of the city, Urbana Self Storage has been in its current location almost 33 years since Long's father, Allen

Toomire, built the complex in 1985. Long said he was encouraged by a friend who opened a storage facility in Fairborn, one of the first in Ohio.

"Back then it was new and people didn't know whether they trusted someone to store their property," she said. "But now I'm turning people away and there's a real need for it in this community. I've even been to storage seminars in

Columbus just to learn about feasibility, to know whether my community needed another building, before I started this."

The company continues to be family-owned and operated, with Long as manager and her two sisters, Vicki Henson and Amy Lewis, the silent partners. She holds regular office hours, but said she is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for those who want to rent a storage space.

"I sit here Monday through Friday and people can walk in and talk to me," she said.

Long is available in the front office from 1 to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 9 a.m. to noon on Wednesday. For more information about the business call 937-653-8383 or visit www.urbanaselfstorage.com.

Christopher Selmek can be reached at 937-652-1331

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