

# The Village News

mywestliberty.com

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West Liberty, OH 43357

937-465-2716

February 2022

## WL Fire Department:

### Electric Portable Heater Safety

When weather turns cold, it can bring a chill into our home. Portable space heaters have become a popular way to supplement central heating or heat one room. If you plan to use portable electric space heaters, make sure to follow these tips and recommendations.

### Heater Checklist

Purchase a heater with the seal of a qualified testing facility. Keep heater at least 3 feet away from anything that can burn.  
Choose a heater with a thermostat and overheat protection. Place the heater on a solid flat surface. Avoid carpet if possible.  
Make sure it has tip over protection to shut off if knocked over.  
Keep out of foot traffic and never block an exit.  
Keep children away from heaters  
Plug heater directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord or surge protector.  
Space heaters should be turned off and unplugged when you leave room or go to bed.

**Darin Leach**  
WL Fire Chief

## WL Fire Department 100th Anniversary:

This year marks the 100th Anniversary of our Fire Department. In honor of this historic event, we will be recognizing the WLFD Chiefs each month in the newsletter.

## February: Conrad Hostetler

Fire Chief Conrad Hostetler started with West Liberty in January 1981. He served as a firefighter under Chief James Hostetler until December of 1999 when he was promoted to Lieutenant. Over the next 13 years he slowly moved up the ranks to Captain, Assistant Chief and in December of 2013. He was hired as Chief to replace former Chief John Esch. Chief Hostetler retired June 30, 2021.

## WL Mayor - Jill McKelvey

**“All of us, at some time or other, need help. Whether we're giving or receiving help, each one of us has something valuable to bring to this world. That's one of the things that connects us as neighbors—in our own way, each one of us is a giver and a receiver.”**  
**Mr. Rogers**

This month I am writing about being a good neighbor. Each of us acts as a good neighbor when we are watching out for our neighbors. When they are on vacation and we are watching their house, or we shovel their sidewalks or driveway after a snowfall, or we bring over food when there is illness or a death in the family, our village is full of good neighbors and as the mayor, I am very appreciative of each of you who helps make our village a kind place to live. Sometimes being a good neighbor is just listening to another who is dealing with depression or other issues. Mental health concerns with the current medical environment can be challenging. We are all dealing with this in our own way and it can be trying, so we are a support system for each other. Later this winter the village will be mailing out a Good Neighbor Guide. It will give each resident the resources that exist in our community when you need a question answered. Like what ordinances or zoning codes apply to this issue I am dealing with (for example: How can I get rid of this old couch? or I found a dog that is wandering through my neighborhood without a collar, whom do I call?). This guide will be your resource with answers to many questions you may have now or in the future. The Village government needs to be a good neighbor too. We are here to provide services to make our residents' lives better. Thank you for being good neighbors.



## **WL Water/Sewer Department:**

### **Water Dept. News:**

Our New (1/2017) Water Treatment Plant (most should last 50 to 75 years) has been doing a great job producing mildly soft water and removing our main aesthetic contaminants, Iron and Manganese. We only find trace elements of these measured in parts per billion. We have started to gather data for a rate study and have contacted RCAP (Rural Community Assistance Program) for their expertise. It has come to our attention that there is a shortage of qualified candidates for Water and Wastewater Treatment plants. Part of our study should take this in to account when creating new pay ordinances to remain competitive for future hiring needs.

### **Wastewater Dept. News:**

Urine for a surprise this month. There will be no poop jokes. There are two upcoming wastewater projects. One includes replacing damaged sewer main on Linden and Race St and adding a new sewer main on Sidney and Reynolds. The 2<sup>nd</sup> project includes UV Disinfection at Wastewater plant to replace old Chlorine Gas System (dangerous) and lift station effluent check valve/pipe replacement. It would not be a pleasant smell if any of these systems fail☺. Both of these projects have low interest funding available through the Ohio EPA.

### **Fun (Not Really) Facts:**

- Average % Passing Rate of all Water and Wastewater operators taking test in December 2021 was 21%. Water Supply Level 1, only 13% passed, Wastewater Level 2 only, 23% passed. These are the minimum licenses required to run West Liberty Water/Wastewater plants.
- Ohio has 6772 Public Water Systems. These include Community, Non-Transient Non-Community (seasonal Schools, Camps) and Transient Non-Community (annual campgrounds, rest stops, gas stations etc.) 4,031 of total are smaller Transient Non-Community Systems, not all of which need certified operators depending on level of treatment.
- Ohio Currently has 3647 Active Water Operators. 7.86 million of our 11.78 million in Ohio live in Villages/Cities >1800. Water Operators represent about 47 people /100,000 city dwellers. There are 37,873 Licensed Attorneys in Ohio and 37,050 Realtors (interesting).
- We were informed that we killed 18 trees last month due to the length of the newsletter and I only had three comments about my spectacular jokes, so we condensed it this month

**Brad Hudson Water/Wastewater Superintendent**

## **Emergency Weather Alert Sign Up**

### **Champaign County Emergency Alert**

Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

[www.champaignema.org](http://www.champaignema.org)

Call 937-484-1642 leave message with following info.

Name, Address, Phone Number(s), and the carrier if leaving a cell phone number. Subscribers choose which weather alerts to receive.

## **WL Historical Society**

Make a lasting donation to the West Liberty Historical Society and you'll always be a part of our town's history. The West Liberty Historical Society has only 10 new Opera House lights that they are asking a donation of \$749 for each. A name plate will be put on our donation wall. This could be a personal name, in memory of, or a business name.

Please email [www.westlibertyhistory.com](http://www.westlibertyhistory.com) or call Sherry Barger 937-603-0569 for more information.



## **WL City Council**

I had an exciting event happen to me recently that involved me being stuck in the village elevator. Our newly restored opera house has an elevator making it ADA accessible which I need, because I'm either using a walker or my electric wheelchair due to a deteriorated nerve root in my back that has essentially paralyzed my right leg. I was heading upstairs to a public meeting in the elevator when it suddenly jolted to a stop, but the doors didn't open for me to exit. So, after bravely assessing the situation... I started pushing buttons! Nothing. I banged on the doors! Nothing. I called Police Chief Shane Oelker who I knew was at the meeting. I called the Mayor who was at the meeting. Nothing. (They were dealing with another situation just prior to the beginning of the meeting.) So, I texted my situation to Police Chief Oelker and Mayor McKelvey. "I'm trapped in the elevator!" Probably not a text either of them ever expected to see, but that got the ball rolling. It wasn't long before the doors were pried open and three firemen rescued me. The floor of the elevator was about 18" below the second level of the opera house. They were able to get me out pretty quickly. I wasn't harmed. I wasn't having a life altering emergency, but I was relieved to see help was there. We are extremely lucky to be able to have first responders like we do. The WL Fire Department, our WL Police Department, our EMS all are a credit to our village. The next time you hear a siren blaring, lift up those first responders, because it's not always a convenient time or the best weather conditions they are working under.

**Patty Kauffman,  
Council Member**



## **Logan County Emergency Alert**

Complete the registration process

Logan County EMA

[www.co.logan.oh.us/201/Emergency-Management-Agency](http://www.co.logan.oh.us/201/Emergency-Management-Agency)

# Sherman Ricketts Memorial Park Update

## Bellefontaine Examiner Article

### Donations benefit new water fountain, bike fix-it station

BY GENNA HOFFER  
EXAMINER CONTRIBUTOR

A variety of amenities will be taking shape in the upcoming months to benefit walkers, bicyclists and community members at the new Sherman Ricketts Memorial Park through several donations received for the space, which is located at the West Liberty Trail head for the Simon Kenton Trail.

Wednesday, Tammy Allison from the Mary Rutan Foundation presented a check for \$4,000 to West Liberty Mayor Jill

McKelvey to fund the installation of a water fountain/bottle refill station.

In addition, Jim Cook from the Simon Kenton Pathfinders was in attendance at the 916 Sidney St., West Liberty, park to share about the bike repair station that the Pathfinders will be purchasing and installing.

The park was formally dedicated in May 2021 in remembrance of the West Liberty Town Marshal Sherman Ricketts, who was killed in the line of duty in 1962 after being

shot by an assailant in the village.

Ricketts' family members have spearheaded the project with the help of village officials. The organizers hope to re-dedicate the space this year in May, which will mark the 60th anniversary of his death.

As the weather warms this spring, a shelter house will be built by Ohio Hi-Point Career Center students. The shelter will provide a location for those who need electricity to charge their devices and a spot to take a break and to refuel.

In addition, landscaping design at the park will be provided by both West Liberty-Salem and Benjamin Logan high school students. Benches and trees will be donated by area residents as well.

The Ricketts family will continue to be involved in funding and planning.

Other potential events are on the horizon as well at the park.

"I hope to do an event after everything is all finished to do with helmet safety," Allison said. "We want to promote wellness and safety for the community."

Those involved in the project want to welcome



new faces to West Liberty and all it has to offer. The trail head also features a popular "selfie" spot with a butterfly mural located nearby the park.

The bike trail runs through three different bike trails and takes bicyclists north to Bellefontaine to as far south as Cincinnati.



# SIMON KENTON PATHFINDERS

Issue 6 • 2021 Year In Review • January 1, 2022

## WEST LIBERTY TRAIL HEAD TO GET IMPROVEMENTS

One of the big goals of the Pathfinders when we built the Simon Kenton Trail, was that our communities and businesses along the trail would both embrace and expand on what we have done. The Village of West Liberty has done both!

Earlier in 2021, the village named the trail head the "Sherman Ricketts Memorial Park" in honor of a former village marshal who was killed while on the job back in 1962. In addition, a Porta-let has been provided for trail users during warm weather and a beautiful and already very popular butterfly mural was created at the trail head where many cyclists and walkers stop for a "selfie".

Coming in 2022 will be additional improvements as follows: a small shelter house (built by Hi-Point JVS students), water fountain, bike repair station, benches and



landscaping. Funding for this project comes from an initial AARP Community Grant of \$11,500; a \$4,000 grant from the Mary Rutan Foundation for the water fountain; the bike repair station will be purchased and installed by the Pathfinders and landscape design is being

provided by students at both West Liberty and Benjamin Logan high schools. Benches and trees will be donated by area residents. Also, the Ricketts family is involved in planning and funding.

The village hopes to have the majority of this project completed for a re-dedication of the park in late June of 2022 which is the 60th anniversary of Marshal Ricketts' death. A big thanks goes out to the village leaders and family members of Sherman Ricketts for your vision! Great job West Liberty!

## West Liberty Trail Head



Dan Sheridan of Marion was one of the first to get his selfie at the new butterfly mural at the West Liberty trail head.

## WL Village Clerk/Secretary

Tax season is upon us. It is mandatory all West Liberty Residents must file municipal tax with Regional Income Tax Agency. To file go to [www.ritaohio.com](http://www.ritaohio.com) forms>individual>Form 37 – forms and instructions. If you are retired and earn NO income please fill out the Exception Form. Questions call RITA 1.800.860.7482.

The Village of West Liberty has ended 2021 with a lot of new and exciting things. We have dedicated Sherman Ricketts Memorial Park - located near the bike path. We will be installing a water bottle filler station with a dog bowl fountain this spring. A shelter house will be built this summer with an AARP grant the village received. If you haven't seen it – please visit the Mental Health Butterfly on the black silo at 915 Sidney St. This butterfly is seen from the Simon Kenton Bike Path. We have a Veterans Park to honor Purple Heart Recipients. It is located between Zanesfield Rd and CR 189. You can't miss it – it is lighted with purple lights. There are 14 stones honoring names, dates of service, branch, etc. of each Purple Heart Recipient. We will be adding more this year.

The Village has financial ended 2021 very well. The expenditures and revenues for each fund are as follows:

2021 Totals	Revenue	Expenditures
General	\$941995	\$795188
Street Construction	\$102541	\$90701
State Highway	\$8347	\$19922
Cemetery	\$55954	\$40031
Motor Vehicle	\$9208	\$17990
Brown	\$83292	\$77147
Water	\$350232	\$320238
Sewer	\$365228	\$276325
Garbage Rubbish	\$312072	\$267106

## Bill Payments

View and pay your bill online at [www.ub-pay.com](http://www.ub-pay.com).

The Municipal Code is **WestLiberty357**

**Please DO NOT use govpaynow.com because payments will not be accepted if used.**

## Masks

Although there are no State or County mandates for Masks, the Village of West Liberty is taking the following precautions to keep our employees and the residents safe. Please wear a mask into the Clerk's office AND for any meetings attended.

## The Peoples Savings & Loan

## Colepak Splash Pad

## West Liberty - Lions Club Park

3/1/22 at 9:00am, will be the first time available to schedule a **Tuesday Evening Private Party** at the Splash Pad (6pm-9pm) for the upcoming 2022 Summer Season. Please call 937-465-2716 to schedule or needing any information about the Splash Pad located at the WL Lions Club Park in West Liberty, OH  
**Opening Day** - Saturday May 28, 2022  
Hours: Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri, Sat, Sun 10am -8pm  
Tues 10am - 5:30pm Closed 6pm-8pm to Public



## Upcoming Events

All events and info : [www.mywestliberty.com](http://www.mywestliberty.com)

### **West Liberty Lions Club: Pancake Breakfast**

Sat. February 26

7:00am -11:00am

West Liberty United Church of Christ

## Soil Health and Regenerative Ag

with Ray Archuleta

Ray Archuleta is a Certified Professional Soil Scientist with the Soil Science Society of America and has over 30 years experience as a Soil Conservationist, Water Quality Specialist, and Conservation Agronomist with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).



West Liberty Salem High School Cafetorium  
Feb 24, 2022  
Dinner 5:30 pm  
Presentation 6:30 pm

\$20 per person  
Includes Dinner  
RSVP by Feb 21 at  
[go.osu.edu/Archuleta](http://go.osu.edu/Archuleta)

 LOGAN COUNTY LAND TRUST

 THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

# WEST LIBERTY BUSINESS ASSOCIATION