

LOCAL & STATE

BRIEFS

Troy Township meeting

Troy Township will hold their regular monthly meeting Saturday Nov. 20, 2021 at 8 a.m. at the Township Building.

Road Closures

In association with the Athens County Commissioners US 50 Sanitary Sewer project R & R Pipeline/Underground will be conducting work on Carol Lane from Wonderhills Drive to Clearview Drive starting Wednesday, Nov. 17. Carol Lane will be closed between 7 AM and 6 PM. The work will continue until completed with an anticipated reopening date of Friday, Nov. 18, weather permitting. Road closed signs will be in place north of Angela Drive and west of Clearview Drive. Local, school bus, and emergency traffic will be maintained. The road will be re-opened daily after work hours. Residents and those driving in any area of the US 50 Sanitary Sewer Project are asked to slow down and use caution where work is being conducted.

THROWBACK THURSDAY

Ruby Mercer: Opera Star at the Met

In 1906, an Athens, Ohio couple discovered a wonderful package on their front doorstep. It was a baby, a very, very young Ruby Mercer. Much later, a famous vocal teacher discovered Ruby's beautiful clear soprano voice while she was working in Hawaii. The latter discovery led to a life in music with a special emphasis on opera for the Athens girl.

Growing up in Athens, Ruby was surrounded by music from an early age. Her father was the conductor of the local male chorus. Ruby attended Athens High School where she studied journalism under George Starr Lasher, founder of the School of Journalism at Ohio University. While at OU, she spent some time as a student reporter at The Athens Messenger. This writing skill would come in handy alter in life.

After graduating from OU in 1927, she took a job in Hawaii as a teacher in a private school. She was happy in her work and would often sing while working. This is when she was "discovered" by Eleanor Hazzard Peacock, a renowned British vocal teacher. Ms. Peacock agreed to

teach Ruby vocal skills while she was in Hawaii. This was the beginning of many years of tutelage from the most important people in the business of opera. This happened not because of good luck but because every experienced teacher saw something in the voice and personality of Ruby Mercer that was worth pursuing.

Ruby's formal music education started at Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, where she was a standout student. Later, she received a scholarship from Juilliard School in New York City. It seems, she was everyone's favorite student. She was fresh, young and enthusiastic. It was during these years Ruby developed poise and mannerism, as well as voice training, which were essential for a career in opera. Even as a student she sang formally at opera events whenever she could. In 1936, she was the winner of the coveted Naumberg National Competition.

At an early age, Ruby Mercer reached the pinnacle of success for any American opera singer. She played in starring roles at the Metropolitan Opera for two seasons. When the

general manager of the Met, Edward Johnson, first heard Ruby sing, he was very impressed. He noted that her trill on high D was the most thrilling thing he had heard since Lily Pons interpolated a high G at the end of her aria during her performance of Lucia. That's opera talk for, "I like your singing very much."

From the Metropolitan, she obtained a contract with MGM and she also performed in several Broadway shows. Ruby was a very popular and in demand young singer. While she was working at Radio City Music Hall, she performed six to eight shows a day. She was burning the candle at both ends. During this time, she auditioned once again for the Metropolitan Opera. This time, she didn't make the grade. Her voice was out of practice for the precise art of opera. Although Ruby was hurt by the rejection, she picked herself back up and moved on in a big way to other exciting avenues.

Radio was Ruby's next adventure. One of her several successful radio shows was entitled, "Mr. and Mrs. Opera." Her husband at the time was a radio



announcer and a musician. This show and other shows Ruby hosted consisted of conversations about opera and music that also featured her singing. She moved to Canada in 1958 and started the magazine "Opera Canada" a few years later. She was an editor there for 30 years and also founded the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus. During her entire

career in music, Ruby never forgot Athens and Ohio University. She returned to her hometown several times to sing at Memorial Auditorium. Whenever she came home, she enjoyed socializing with members of local music clubs and college kids. She was so popular that the girls from Pi Beta Phi sorority made her an honorary member.

ACCIDENT

Continued from page A1

Corbin's mother, Crystal Lowry, said Corbin is recovering well.

"He's doing really well — he can walk, and everything's going great," Lowry said.

Lowry added that nobody is to blame for the accident.

"We all take precautions, and Tri-County goes by guidelines just the same as everybody else. It was just an accident, and nobody is to blame," Lowry said. "Corbin loves the program. He can't wait to get back, and Tri-County is a great school for learning."

Corbin is studying to become an electrician, Martin said.

Tri-County Career Center Superintendent Connie Altier declined to share details about the incident as the situation remains under investigation and the administration has not yet had the chance to speak with Corbin.

Altier said safety practices are in place to avoid these kinds of accidents. For instance, students are required to complete an Occupational Safety and

Health Administration certification course, and students receive safety instruction prior to every lab.

Altier said the school would evaluate its safety protocols and standards in light of Corbin's accident, but added that the incident was handled well.

"I feel like we handled it the best we could at the time, and we'll assess it moving forward," Altier said.

Martin, who also attended Tri-County, said there is inherent risk in electrical work.

"That kind of work is a dangerous job to do. They go out and put their life on the line so everybody else can have power," Martin said.

A fundraiser was set up by Tiffany Lyons, a friend of the family, to help with Corbin's medical costs. In addition to bills related to Corbin's surgeries and hospital costs, Martin said the fundraiser will also support the family with costs related to Corbin's air ambulance to the hospital.

"I know we don't have that kind of money," Martin said.

Lyons said the fund-



PHOTO PROVIDED BY TIFFANY LYONS

Corbin, a Tri-County student, was injured following a fall in his power line class on Nov. 12.

raiser will help support the family while Corbin is unable to work or attend school, and through ongoing travel back and forth from Columbus for hospital visits. Lyons said she was motivated to start the fundraiser because she is close to Corbin's family, and the family has supported her in the past.

"The family is very supportive, they would help somebody else in need," Lyons said. "When my brother passed away in April they were by my

side the whole time."

The fundraiser, titled 'Corbin accident help' on GoFundMe, encourages donations of any amount to help with Corbin's recovery.

Lyons added that Corbin is excited to continue pursuing electrical work.

"Corbin is a very outgoing kid and he's ready to climb the pole again," Lyons said. "It didn't faze him one bit. He's ready to break free out of the hospital."

PARK

Continued from page A1

"It's gonna be a big green space that the city has, and I would hate to just mow it and have it be a wasted space," Frank said. "It's a nice spot by the river, and I think it could be used for recreation."

Frank said the area, accessible by entrances near Advance Auto Parts and Schultz Physical Therapy, is an ideal location for a dog park.

"Down there we have plenty of space, and it's not in any residential neighborhoods, so you're not gonna be bothering people at their houses," Frank said.

Residents have expressed interest in a dog park for many years, and the city has explored opportunities for a dog park at various points but has never had the right location available, Frank said.

Nelsonville resident and dog owner Sarah Milligan, a member

of the city's Planning Commission, said a dog park would be a major asset to the community.

"I take my dogs to the dog park in Athens, because they need a chance to socialize and run crazy," Milligan said. "But Nelsonville is a pretty pet-friendly community — I always see a lot of people walking dogs when I'm walking mine. I think a dog park will keep people closer to home, and it might encourage pet ownership, and pet owners are generally happy people."

Milligan said she's floated the idea of a dog park with city officials for several years and is excited that the idea now seems likely to come to fruition.

"I think it's a positive for the city and any positive we get for the community is awesome. So I'm stoked," Milligan said.

Frank said the dog park would hopefully not pose a cost to the city, as the city has enough lead

time to pursue grant opportunities.

The Planning and Development Committee also discussed other ideas for improving the area that would complement the proposed dog park, including a sidewalk, shelter house, soccer field and paved parking lot.

Beyond the dog park, the idea that appears furthest along is a ramp to the river, which would serve as an official spot for community members and travelers to take boats in and out of the water. Frank said he'd received a "preliminary thumbs up" from county officials to pursue the ramp.

Frank added that he hopes community members will lead the way in planning for the development of the dog park and broader area.

"I'm a dog guy and I'll have my dogs down there, but I think it's best that people from the community do it because it's their park," Frank said.

Crash on US 50 under investigation by OSHP

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Troopers from the Athens Post of The Ohio State Highway Patrol are investigating a two-vehicle crash on US 50 near State Route 144 that resulted in multiple serious injuries. The injury crash around 3:12 p.m. on Monday, Nov. 15, 2021.

Dustin Roberts, age 39, of Cutler, OH was driving a 2008 Kia Spectra northbound on SR 144. Shane Faddis, age 34, of Athens, OH was driving a 2000 Dodge Dakota pickup westbound on US 50.

Roberts failed to yield from a stop sign and was struck by Faddis.

Roberts and two other passengers were airlifted to Grant Hospital in Columbus for their injuries sustained as a result of the crash. Faddis was transported to Marietta Memorial in Belpre with non-life threatening injuries.

The OSHP was assisted on scene by the Athens County EMS, Little Hocking EMS and Coolville Fire Department. The crash remains under investigation.

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