

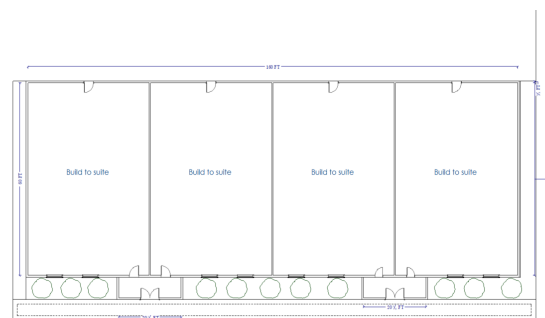


*The Marion Community Development Organization (MCDO) is an organization under the laws of the State of Ohio, not-for-profit. The mission of the organization shall be to act as a coordinating body to assist local organizations meet the changing needs of the Marion Community through planned development while maintaining its agricultural profile. The activities will be directed toward, but not limited to, development of infrastructure, housing, family care, education, small business, recreation, and agriculture.*

## ***President's Message—Ted Bertke***

### **Office Space Coming Soon!**

We're excited to announce that new office space will be available soon. This office space will be in the Industrial Park along 716. Whether you're looking to expand or relocate, this space offers a great opportunity in a convenient location. For more details or to express interest, please call **Cole at 419-733-2358**.



## ***Marion Local Schools—Mike Pohlman***

It was an outstanding 2024-2025 school year in which our students achieved at a tremendously high level on their state assessments and provided our community with great entertainment in their extra-curricular activities. Marion Local students are competitors and they work hard to produce both in and out of the classroom. I would like to congratulate all of our students for their successes throughout the year. Congratulations to all of our seventy-two graduates who participated in commencement ceremonies on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Austin Niekamp was named valedictorian and Ian Rindler was named salutatorian. Of the seventy-two graduates fifteen received Honors Diplomas and twenty-one received the President's Award for Academic Excellence. We are very proud of our graduates and their accomplishments and thank all of the donors that sponsored scholarships to help these individuals further their education.

The new facility has taken shape with the gymnasium walls going up first and they are laying block in the remaining areas surrounding the gym. (See picture below.) Many floor slabs were poured and steel will come later this summer. If you recall, we received a \$896,000 grant from the state to bring municipal water from the Chickasaw water tower to the Marion Local school district. That project is going very well and the water lines have been brought to school grounds and we are preparing to hook them up to our existing buildings. (continued on page 2)



### ***Marion Local Schools—Mike Pohlman (continued)***

This year was very successful and it is because of the collaboration we have with you. I would like to congratulate Treva Fortkamp, Jody Gerlach, and Angie Leugers on their retirement from teaching. Sherry Schoenlein also retired from driving bus but plan to rehire for next school year. We are very appreciative of their hard work and dedication. Mandatory shutdown for athletes this year is June 29<sup>th</sup> to July 13<sup>th</sup>. I hope you have an enjoyable and safe summer.

### ***301 Club—Luke Bertke***

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club would like to thank everyone who has renewed their memberships for 2025. We would also like to welcome the new members that are joining us. It is because of all of our members that we are able to help support so many different youth summer programs and assist the local parks with additional funds. If you have not received a renewal form in the mail or would like to become a member, please contact Luke Bertke through email at [mcdo301.group@gmail.com](mailto:mcdo301.group@gmail.com), by phone at 419-953-6114, or contact any of the other committee members (Doug Bender, Luke Bertke, Dan Liette, Wes Everman, Kyle Moeller, Alex Moeller, Aaron Timmerman, or Jason Wolters).

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club donated over **\$16,000** to the following youth summer programs and local parks; Marion Little League, Youth Softball, Youth Soccer Program, Pony League Baseball, Acme, Jr. Acme, Youth (boys and girls) Basketball, Chickasaw Parks, Marion Township Park, and Osgood Park. Thank you to everyone who helped make this possible!

The summer youth sports programs are back underway for the 2025 season. We would like to thank all of the volunteers who help coach and assist these programs.

Our annual chicken dinner fundraiser is scheduled for Sunday, July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The pickup will again be at the Marion Local High School at the Commons Entrance between 11:00 and 12:30.

The MCDO 301 Recreation Club is a non-profit group that has been actively supporting Marion youth programs and our local parks since 1996. Our goal is to help sustain active programs and the development of our parks. We are able to accomplish this through membership fees, donations, & our annual chicken dinner sales. Our community and children benefit from your generosity.

### ***The Retreat House: Spiritual Centers—Robin Goettemoeller***

As part of our branding efforts, the Retreat Center is developing a new website. Internally, updating the website with current event information and changes to our two locations will be easier. For visitors, the improved layout will make it easier to quickly find the information needed. We hope to launch the new site by mid-summer.

**RETREAT CENTER GALA 2025**-We invite you to join us for an evening of community spirit and celebration at the second annual Retreat Center Gala on August 26.

#### **Two meaningful ways to support our mission!**

- 1 Buy Dinner Gala tickets for you and your friends
- 2 If you can't attend, visit our online auction and bid on the amazing items!

Click the link for more information <https://event.gives/retreatcentergala25>

This gala is more than just an event; it's a unique opportunity to engage with the community while supporting the ongoing mission of the Maria Stein Retreat Center. Proceeds from the Gala support our "Youth Giving Back Fund," which helps high school students attend faith formation retreats.

#### **WE ARE BUSY**

We anticipate an exceptionally busy summer! While we typically slow down when high schools break for summer, the number of meals served from July to September is expected to more than double our average from the last five years! This year may mark the beginning of a new trend as we welcome new visitors to our retreat centers!

Renovations and Improvements to both locations continue. The facilities team recently completed the renovation of the Maria Stein dining hall and kitchen, and private rooms continue to be updated, with over half completed.

#### **WHAT'S GOING ON**

Here is a sample of upcoming events coming this summer:

- Fatima Mass – the evening of August 8
- St. Philomena Mother/Daughter retreat - August 8-10
- Retreat Center Fundraising Gala – August 26
- Vertical Marriage Conference - September 27

## ***Maria Stein Shrine—Mark Travis & Heidi Pierron***

The Shrine is honored to offer the St. Peregrine Relic for prayer and veneration for those who are on a journey with cancer, whether it be as a patient or as a care-partner. The next **Cancer Prayer Service** will be held on Sunday, July 13th at 2:00pm. For more information or to submit your intentions, contact Caleb Gaier at 419-925-4532 or [c.gaier@mariasteinshrine.org](mailto:c.gaier@mariasteinshrine.org).

The Brunner Bake Shop is looking to extend their hours to include Saturdays, if you are interested in volunteering one Saturday a month, contact Mark Travis at [m.travis@mariasteinshrine.org](mailto:m.travis@mariasteinshrine.org).

Additional Upcoming Events:

- Our popular **"Summer Day with the Saints"**, for children entering 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grades next fall, will be held on August 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>, the same program is offered each day (register online at [mariasteinshrine.org](http://mariasteinshrine.org))
- **Heritage Day Celebration (HDC)** will be held on Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup> from 1 pm to 4 pm. Bring the family and enjoy burgers, hot dogs, sweet treats and lots of fun for the kids!

## ***Zahn Marion Township Library—Juli Berning***

Our summer reading program is in full swing. This year's theme is "Color Our World". Registration began in May and the program ends on **July 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Registrations will be online with minutes read being logged onto paper logs. Go to [SRP.MercerLibrary.org](http://SRP.MercerLibrary.org) to register. You can download your reading logs or pick them up in the library. We will have speaker and craft programs at 1:30 and again at 3 pm on the Mondays of July 7<sup>th</sup>, July 14<sup>th</sup> and July 21<sup>st</sup>. Door prizes are awarded and a craft is made at each Monday session. Kids going into grades 1 thru 5 can read to earn a firetruck ride, extra recess at school, an ice cream party at school and a nameplate in a new book. Kids going into kindergarten or younger can be read to for a chance to win prizes. Kids going into 6<sup>th</sup> grade thru adults can read to win prizes like: Kings Island tickets, Winan's gift cards, museum passes and much more. You can also earn points by attending our in house programs and doing the scavenger hunt on the Marion Twp. Bike path. Stop in the library to pick up a flyer or check out our Facebook page for more details. If you are in our summer reading program, we also have coupons you can pick up in the library for free admission to the Ohio State Fair for ages 5-18, 50% off one admission to the 2024 Ohio Renaissance Festival and back again this year is the Ohio State Parks camping/overnight stay coupon (this is for \$10 off). Our end of summer reading program party will be on **Wednesday, July 30<sup>th</sup>** at the Marion Elementary Gym at **NOON** and our entertainment will be "Tada Magician". Join us for these other upcoming events:

Thursday, July 24<sup>th</sup> 11:30/12 noon- Lunch & Learn at the library. Jennifer Sexton with the American Red Cross will speak on The Changing Face of Disaster Relief. An eye opening presentation on how disaster response is evolving in a world of rising temperature and more frequent disasters. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm. Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

Wednesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> 12 noon- End of summer reading party at the Marion Local Elementary gym. Entertainment provide by "Tada Magician". Prizes awarded.

Thursday, August 21<sup>st</sup> 6:30-7:30 pm- Lego night. No age limit. Parental supervision required as some pieces are rather small.

Thursday, August 28<sup>th</sup> 11:30/12 noon –Lunch & Learn at the library. Speaker TBA. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm. Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

Tuesday, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm- Family night. Stories and a craft. No pre-registration needed.

Thursday, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> 6:30-7:30 pm - Lego night. No age limit. Parental supervision required as some pieces are rather small.

Thursday, Sept. 25<sup>th</sup> 11:30/12 noon- Lunch & Learn at the library. Speaker TBA. Lunch will be at 11:30 am and is available to first 25 who sign up. Presentation begins at 12 pm. Register at Mercer County Council on Aging 419-586-1644.

Story hour is also held on every Thursday morning beginning at 10:30 am. Everyone is welcome!

Senior citizens play cards in the library basement every Thursday at 1:30 pm. Join the fun!

All dates, times and information on all of our upcoming programs are available on our Facebook page. Just go to [www.facebook.com/ZahnMarionLibrary](http://www.facebook.com/ZahnMarionLibrary) and "like" our page. Or you can call us at 419-925-4966. So come in to the library today and check us out!

## ***Marion Township Park—Lee Heitkamp***

The Park Board of Marion Township Park meets monthly. We continue to focus on improving and maintaining the park for our community. Later this summer the park board will be replacing the weathered and worn scoreboard on diamond 3, and the baseball committee plans to put up a scoreboard on diamond 4. We want to thank the baseball committee for donating their time in doing this. We want to thank the 301 Club for contributing to the new scoreboard as well.

With baseball and softball seasons winding down, the fundamental league will now take to the fields on Mondays through the beginning of August.

Thus far our fundraising efforts for the upcoming shelter house project have been fruitful. We are approaching the 50% mark! Thank you for your generosity. At the same time we are finalizing the plans and hope to proceed with construction in the coming months!

At the time of this writing the Countryfest has just ended and the Township Park's Taco Boat and Waffle stand had another great turn out. We are pleased with how this year's booth came together. We would also like to thank Sajacks Trucking and Moeller Trucking for their bids in the Loblolly Wood Turners auction. Their bids in this auction will go towards the Fundraising efforts of the shelter house project.

The annual alumni softball and volleyball tournament will be held July 25th, 26th and 27th. Come on out to see 127 North on Friday night and REKT on Saturday night and Conner Albers on Sunday to wrap up the weekend. Mark your calendars to enjoy some good times with old friends!

If you have suggestions for the park's future, we welcome those discussions. Current Park Board members include: Lee Heitkamp (President – 419-305-8238), Troy Luebke (project manager- 419-733-1675) Jeff Wolters (Treasurer – 419-953-0373), Diane Alexander (Social media/email coordinator – 419-733-5968), Ryan Stucke (Rentals – 419-852-5088), Greg Hartings (419-852-8177), Jodi Winner (419-953-3290), Renee Hartings (Secretary/Concession stand - 419-305-5530), and Brenda Hamberg (419-852-0292).

---

## ***Village of Chickasaw—Nick Thobe***

### **Chickasaw Village 2025 mid-year report**

#### **Clock**

A clock will be installed in front of the library thanks to the estate of Virgil and Elaine Puthoff. Virgil was a local business owner, long-time village council member, mayor, park board member and president. He along with Don Niekamp were instrumental in founding the Park Board. We are grateful to Virgil and Elaine for their donation to the village. It will serve as a testimonial to Virgil's love for the village and his long-time service.

#### **Main Water line**

A 12" main water line was added from Flyer Dr. in the Industrial Park to the Marion Local Schools in Maria Stein. This will provide water to the schools and fire protection to the west end of Maria Stein with fire hydrants located along State Route 716.

#### **Fire Hydrant painting and repair**

Fire hydrants in need of painting are being addressed along with any needed repairs and flushing. Fire hydrants are an asset that are now being tracked by the Silversmith data program that was purchased in 2024.

#### **Streets**

Center, Mill and Catholic streets are scheduled for paving this summer.

#### **Parks**

The Village applied for and received approximately \$71,000 thru the state capital improvement budget that has been used to install the rubber safety surface at the VFW Park and will also be used to resurface the ball diamond infield. The Park Board match was an additional 20%.

The park board was very active in 2025 hosting a very successful community picnic May 30, 31 and June 1. The funds earned at the picnic once again have gone back into park improvements. Thanks to the Park Board and all the volunteers that help make all these things happen.

The Fire Department once again hosted a successful 5K run on Saturday morning of the picnic. The run brings in a variety of people and provides us a chance to highlight our village as they run through the streets.

#### **Businesses**

Ohio Recycling has expanded their business and built a new building at the corner of Wayne St and St. Rte. 274. We are proud to have Ohio Recycling as a part of our community.