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Ralph Martin, right, chats with Al Myers, a retired Delaware County sheriff and who has known Martin for the last 25 years, with Mayor Carolyn Kay Riggle. Martin received a proclamation from Riggle declaring it “Ralph Martin Day” — for his more than 50 years of excellence at his shoe repair store, 28 W. Winter St., in downtown Delaware. “Everybody loves Ralph,” she said, adding that he is the truly the last of downtown’s early entrepreneurs. Friends and family gathered at his shop to congratulate him.

Sunbury’s Bicentennial Princess Brooke Setmire, shown here with Sunbury Mayor Tommy Hatfield at the November 9 Bicentennial Reception, ends her reign at the close of 2016. Brooke has represented the village at a variety of events throughout the year.

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• Delaware’s Candy Store featuring Marie’s Chocolates.
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• Valentine Specialties for him and her.
Ohio Superintendent Paolo DeMaria dances with students of Scioto Ridge Elementary School to conclude an assembly where the school was recognized for receiving a national award.

Delaware Hayes High School Principal Ric Stranges leads the senior class on their end-of-the-year walk through the halls at Hayes High on May 12. Students sprayed underclassmen with Silly String and threw baby powder in the air to celebrate the end of the school year. The seniors graduated at a ceremony on May 21 at the high school.

Mourners gathered at the Big Walnut High School Stadium on July 26 for a candlelight vigil in remembrance of upcoming sophomore student Mitchell Young. Young, 16, was killed in a crash on July 25 on State Route 3 near Sunbury Meadows Drive. Hundreds of staff members and students attended the vigil to remember Young.

Julie German, then principal at Delaware’s Dempsey Middle School, prepares to have her head covered in whipped cream by student Macie Levings at a pep rally on March 29 after her head was covered with ice cream and chocolate sauce. German, along with the current assistant principal, Daniel Bartha, were made into “human sundaes” as a reward for students completing testing and making donations to cancer research.
Students in the Delaware Area Career Center’s firefighting course put out a fire during a drill on April 12 on the North Campus’ burn yard. Course instructors said that during this drill, students have to navigate smoke-filled halls and a staircase, all while carrying a hose, and then must extinguish the fire. The drills were just a few minutes long and then a new team of students would be rotated in and go through the course.

Members of several local emergency agencies stand at attention in the rain on the afternoon of Feb 24 at the funeral for former Delaware Fire Chief Wilbur Bills at St. Mary’s Cemetery on South Sandusky Street. Bills was the fire chief between 1957 and 1980, and passed away on Feb. 20 at the age of 89. A procession of emergency vehicles was led from St. Mary’s Church to the cemetery before the funeral.

Delaware Area Career Center Instructor and Delaware County Sheriff’s Major David Wiseman presents a graduation certificate to Erica Tetreault, a graduating cadet, at the ceremony for the Basic Peace Officer Academy on April 21 at the Delaware Area Career Center’s South Campus. Tetreault was one of 20 students in DACC’s 44th peace officer academy. Wiseman said the students took the class for seven months and added he had never seen an entire class graduate without anyone dropping out.

A Marysville bike patrol officer slides his bike into Delaware city attorney Darren Shulman (in a protective suit) on May 20 during a training scenario part of the International Police Mountain Bike Association training session hosted by Delaware City Police. The scenario involved a suspect fleeing from two bike officers and then a man with a knife confronting officers. Trainees were taught to use their bikes as tools to keep distance away from them and their attackers. Trainees were also taught how to use the bike to conduct traffic stops and how to deal with disorderly individuals.
Daniel W. Griffin shows drawings of the Evans Farm development at an Orange Township trustees meeting in March.

The Evans Farm open house took place May 22 at Heritage Elementary School, 679 Lewis Center Road, Lewis Center. The open house will offer information on the planned development, a chance to meet the builders and a timeline. This photo, taken from Lewis Center Road, shows a sign on part of the site, with a previous owner’s home in the background. The Evans Farm Town Center development will eventually include 1,950 single-family homes in Orange and Berlin townships over a 10-year period. The planned “walk-able neighborhood” will include town centers with retail and office space, a school, parks and a YMCA. Other amenities include baseball diamonds, an agricultural center, a trout stream and a bridge over the railroad tracks. The developer is Daniel W. Griffin.

A beautiful day at the end of July brought a community together to break ground on a “new urbanism movement” taking place in southern Delaware County. Both county and township officials helped the developers of the Evans Farm project officially break ground.

A drawing of some retail/office space in Evans Farm Town Center.
Discover Front Porch Living!

Ever dream of living in a community where you can walk to neighborhood shops and restaurants...enjoy nature trails, fishing ponds, gardens and farmer's markets...and living in a unique custom home with a large front porch, perfect for getting to know your neighbors?

We have. It's called Evans Farm. A new community...inspired by the past and built for the future.
Kathleen Miller, the owner of Button Up, 29 N. Sandusky St., laughs when talking to customers while showcasing some of her products for Small Business Saturday after Thanksgiving. Downtown Delaware businesses have sales on Friday and Saturday because of the Ohio State-Michigan football game is at noon Saturday.

Al Myers plays a string instrument at the end of the “short-cut alley” where his music store is located. Myers started Cross Strings, 11 1/2 W. Winter St., in October 2015, but struggles to attract traffic to the store because of the location.

Tammy McWherter frosts a cake at Home Slices Bakery and Cafe, 2 N. Sandusky St. The bakery had its grand opening in April.

Delaware County Community Market manager Bob Sullivan-Neer stands in front of his store at 222 E. William St. The market held its first “Strawberry Festival” on Father’s Day.
Delaware County Snapshots 2016

THE 2016 ELECTION

Jim Browning, co-chairman of Better Roads for Delaware political action committee, poses in front of Valleyside Drive Extension, one of the priority projects of Moving Delaware Forward initiative from the city of Delaware. Delaware residents voted Nov. 8 against increasing the income tax to 2 percent from 1.85 percent.

Mike West of Chatham Lane drove the “vote no” campaign for Delaware’s income tax road levy. West opposes the Valleyside Drive Extension project and thinks City Council is rushing the levy.

Big Walnut Local School District Treasurer Terri Eyerman, left, and superintendent Angie Pollock watch the screen at the Delaware County Board of Elections on election night, and the news was not what they hoped for. Voters defeated the school district’s $133.9 million, 8.3-mil bond issue with 6,191 votes against, 5,271 for — roughly 54 percent to 46 percent. “Whatever plans we come up with next, the need isn’t going to go away,” Pollock said after the final numbers were in. “Obviously, we have a lot of work to do.”
City workers keep sidewalks clear in front of Delaware City Hall as the snow came down during a Tuesday afternoon on the corner of Sandusky and William streets.

Delaware store keepers reported the Friday before Christmas that they had been non-stop with last-minute shoppers looking for that special gift. Kennedy Holtzclaw of Marysville stopped at the Delaware Antique Mall on Sandusky Street to look for a vintage camera for her brother.
Wyandot Run Elementary School music teacher Lori Kipfer dances with one of her classes doing the “Christmas Twist” on Dec. 12. Kipfer hosts music recitals in her classroom throughout the week for all grade levels.

Maura Lein of the Delaware County District Library gushes over the “Ripley’s Believe it or Not!”-themed book, which Debbie Saylor, a patron of Creative Foundations, 57 N. Sandusky St., won while playing bingo on Sept. 21. The library’s Community & Family Outreach Services Department received the 2016 John Phillip award from the Ohio Library Council for the first time.
Delaware County Snapshots 2016

DRONE TAKES FLIGHT

Brandon Klein photos | Gazette

Chris Smith sets up his drone with its remote control system before taking flight. Smith said people can buy drones and have it flying within minutes, which can be a scary situation if they do not follow federal regulations.

_MESSAGES FROM THE EARTH_ Members Steve McCaw, left, Lew Fikes and Sharon Wheeler watch John Klinge of Delaware point out one of the graves at Stratford Cemetery at Stratford Ecological Center. The group had a meeting at the 200-year-old cemetery to train its guides for 5th grade Monday and Tuesday tours.

CEMETERY AT STRATFORD

Brandon Klein photos | Gazette

VETERANS DAY PARADE

Brandon Klein photos | Gazette

Emily O’Halloran, 8, left, and her cousin, Brynna Phillips, 8, wave the flag at the kickoff of the Delaware County Veterans Day parade in downtown Delaware. The parade started at Ohio Wesleyan University and ended at the Delaware County Fairgrounds followed-up with a celebration.

LIVING HISTORY DAY

Brandon Klein photos | Gazette

Former U.S. Marine Corp. Capt. Gary Mittendorf is pushed in a wheelchair by his granddaughter Abby Mittendorf with her father Brian Mittendorf walking next to them during Living History Day at Hyatts Middle School.
The Delaware Gazette and The Sunbury News

Delaware County Snapshots 2016

SLIDING DOWN A SKULL

The “spray and play” section of Delaware's Veterans Park had its grand opening on June 4, and children were out in force to play with the dinosaur-themed toys, such as a sliding board down from a dinosaur skull. The most common comment overheard was, “This is so cool!”

SPRAY AND PLAY

Olivia Hilliard, left, talks to a friend while drying off her 3-year-old daughter, Emma. The mother visited the recently-opened Spray and Play at Veterans Park from Prospect Village in Marion County.

WAVING TO SANTA

As Santa and Mrs. Claus' carriage passed by Clarissa Russell's home on Sandusky Street she waved to them with a wide-eyed wonderful delight from her front row seat inside the warm house.

SANTA AND MRS. CLAUS

As the horse-drawn carriage approached, it revealed a red-gloved hand waving out to the youngsters. The young eyes began to widen as they realized that Santa and Mrs. Claus were the ones waving back at them from inside.
The midway takes on a new look once the sun set on the Delaware County Fair.

Dominic DiPietro likes to eat cotton candy by the hand full.
A big thanks to the City of Delaware for welcoming Olivina Taproom into the Historic Downtown community!

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Delaware County Snapshots 2016
DELAWARE COUNTY FAIR

Luciano Cordi found the ducks in the pool along the midway of the Delaware County Fair to be just within his reach.

John Gradwohl Jr. wanders around the fairgrounds performing as Professor Phineas T. Bubblemaker amazes kids by making bubbles of all sizes for them to chase and pop.
Assistant Delaware County Prosecutor Brian Walter, who specializes in drug-related crimes, presented bags of more than 35 pounds of suspected marijuana during his closing arguments on March 28 in the trial of Syamantaka Detamore in Delaware County Common Pleas Court. Detamore, a Delaware resident, was charged with one count of trafficking in drugs, a third-degree felony, and possession of drugs, a fifth-degree felony. Walter said during his closing argument that Detamore is a professional drug dealer and that the drugs were found in a safe at a property Detamore owns. Detamore’s attorney, Sam Wiener, said the property was rented to someone else and that Detamore had nothing to do with the marijuana. The jury found Detamore guilty on both counts and he was later sentenced to two years of community control.

A notice was posted on the door of Delaware’s Church of God on Lake Street after an April 7 fire, stating that authorities believe the fire was the result of arson. The church originally caught fire due to a suspected electrical issue on March 8 but on April 7 firefighters had to combat another fire at the church that they believe was arson. The investigation is still ongoing.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources issued advisories for three beaches in the central Ohio region including two in Delaware County. High levels of E. coli bacteria were detected in late July prompting the advisories. A sign at Alum Creek Reservoir is pictured above.

The Central Avenue “can-opener” railroad bridge on struck again on a morning in June, when a westbound truck’s trailer was caught under the low bridge and peeled back. Unlike many other trucks, the semi was not trapped under the bridge and was able to pull ahead. The city of Delaware has authorized installing a warning system that would warn truck drivers before they reach the bridge, which has snagged many truck drivers and their loads.
Crews from Land Lease Construction Inc. had a bright, sunny day on March 29 to continue to work on the foundation of the new Delaware County judicial center. Work began in March. Once completed, the building will house the Delaware County Common Pleas Court, the Delaware County Clerk of Courts Office, Adult Court Services and Adult Probation Authority.

The new courthouse is still scheduled to be completed by the end of June 2017.

The second level of the underground parking garage for the new $38 million, five-story Delaware County judicial center on North Sandusky Street seems to be well underway. The lowest level will be for staff and public parking, along with security and screening equipment. The second-level parking will be for staff and separate in-custody defendant delivery.
Delaware County Snapshots 2016

Engineered Materials Systems, city and Delaware Area Chamber of Commerce officials cut a ribbon as part of its new 64,000-square-foot building opening on Innovation Court in January.

Officials from Delaware, Delaware County and Trucco Construction opened Sawmill Parkway to the public in November by cutting yellow caution tape instead of the traditional red ribbon. The 11-mile stretch of road runs north and south from I-270 through Powell and Liberty Township to U.S. 42 just south of the city of Delaware.

First Energy crews removed a utility pole from the left lane of south bound Sawmill Parkway that narrowed traffic to a single lane of the newly-opened corridor. Officials opened the road to the public on Nov. 10.

Fresh pavement past the roundabout on Hyatts Road shows part of the Sawmill Parkway extension project. The signs were removed in the fall.
Children attending Main Street Delaware’s “Picnic with the Cops” event during the August First Friday speak to an animatronic police dog piloted by Delaware police officer and school resource officer John Hartman. The dog could drive, look around and even “talk” (with Hartman’s help) to children during the downtown event, which also included a line-up of police vehicles, a DJ, free hot dogs and many local vendors.

Delaware City Schools Superintendent Paul Craft (left in orange) took a dip after Delaware Hayes High School junior Madeline Allison hit a bulls-eye at Main Street Delaware’s June First Friday dunking booth. Participants had to pay a dollar a ball and all the money was donated to Operation Feed/Mid Ohio Food Bank. Delaware Hayes High School Principal Richard Stranges also took a turn in the downtown dunking booth. Much to his dismay, several members of the varsity basketball team at Hayes took their turns.

Lady Liberty made an appropriate Fourth of July weekend appearance at Main Street Delaware’s First Friday event in downtown Delaware — thanks to a couple of sidewalk artists who were participating in the July theme of “Chalk It Up!” Judging of sidewalk art was done online at the Main Street Delaware Facebook page.

After many hours of assembling, wrapping and bagging groceries, the volunteers of People In Need stood at the ready as families came to pick up their Christmas items. Standing between the tables of full grocery bags were Olentangy Orange High School students waiting to help carry packages out.

Delaware County Snapshots 2016

HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS

ANIMATRONIC POLICE DOG

DUNK THE SUPERINTENDENT

CHALK IT UP
Sandusky and surrounding downtown streets were full of tents and shoppers for the annual Delaware Arts Festival, despite the cool May weather. Exhibitors come from all over the country to display their wares. The purpose of the festival “is to promote artistic endeavors in the visual arts” among the county’s schools, organizers say. Three scholarships are awarded to graduating high school seniors who plan to study art in college.
Delaware County Snapshots 2016

Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther (left) and Delaware County Commissioner Gary Merrell lounge on IKEA furniture last May as company representative Joseph Roth talks about the new store that will open this summer in the Polaris area.

Congressman Pat Tiberi, right, presents a congressional proclamation to Steven B. Tanger, chief executive officer of Tanger Outlets, while Jonathan and Drew Scott of HGTV’s “Property Brothers” look on at the Tanger Outlet Mall opening in Berkshire Township last June.

The historic Strand Theatre in downtown Delaware has shown movies continuously for more than a century, and celebrated its Century of Cinema in 2016.

Landscapers work to finish landscaping of a home built by Dani Homes Ltd. for the 2016 Parade of Homes. Many of the properties have been estimated to cost between $800,000 to $1 million in the Verona development, in Powell off of Powell Road not far from the entrance of the Columbus Zoo.
What a Year!

- **Perfect inspections** by the Ohio Department of Health in our healthcare centers.
- **Perfect scores** in City restaurant inspections.
- **5-star (the best) ratings** from Medcare.gov.
- Ranked **among the best in the nation** by *U.S. News and World Report*.
- **Top-rated** resident and family satisfaction surveys.
- Named best retirement community, best assisted living, and best nursing home by *Gazette* readers in the annual **People's Choice Awards**—again!
- **Renovated Courtyard Restaurant** at Willow Brook Christian Village—perfect spot for Sunday brunch.
- Introduced **Willow Brook by Day**, adult day services program.

And 2017? Watch the **construction** off West William Street as we expand our Transitional and Assisted Living areas to accommodate the growing and changing needs of the elders of our community. More expansion and surprises are in store. Stay tuned!

The newly-renovated Courtyard Restaurant boasts a wood-fired pizza oven, shipped from Italy to satisfy resident cravings.

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**We are proud to be members of this community, and we are grateful for the trust you have shown in us by making Willow Brook the place you call home for yourself and the people you love.**
These students were in the Big Walnut Intermediate School Library last September where district Mental Health & Behavior Intervention Consultant Joey Thompson was being interviewed, and all six students were on a first name basis with Big Walnut’s very own certified Therapy Dog — Stanley. “Nobody seems to know me, but students in every district building know Stanley,” Thompson said. “Whether co-facilitating an elementary social skills group, trotting dutifully beside a student taking a sensory break, or simply comforting students by lying at their feet, Stanley has impacted the emotional health of hundreds.” Kneeling, from left, are Travis May, Rikki Maynard, Molly McLane, and Nathan Long; seated, from left, Kasey Bauer and Taeagan Ng.
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