

F A L L 2 0 1 8

The

City of Union

Newsletter

A Letter from Public Safety Director Mike Blackwell

Much-Needed Police Levy Is On Nov. 6 Ballot

Fellow Citizens,

On behalf of the men and women of the City of Union Police Department, I write this article asking you to support the Police Levy that will be on the ballot on Nov. 6. I encourage all registered voters in the City of Union to vote for the levy. City Council has voted unanimously to support our Police Levy. Our Police Department has provided second-to-none service to all citizens and, for several years now, has operated with very little money.



Public Safety Director Mike Blackwell

The City has not had a new Police Levy since 2004. It has become extremely difficult to maintain our level of quality service over the past few years, with costs quickly increasing. In recent years, the State of Ohio has made drastic cuts to revenue sources for local governments, and the City has been hit particularly hard. Most people only see our officers when they've called or been stopped by them. What you might not see is when they are patrolling our neighborhoods during the day while you're at work or at night when you're asleep, or when they're at the school (*continued, page 5*)

Save the Date!

Leaf Pickup

Starts the week of
Oct. 15 and runs
through the week of
Nov. 19. More
details can be found
in this newsletter.

Beggars' Night

Wednesday, Oct. 31,
from **6 p.m. to 8 p.m.**

Turn on your porch
light if you plan to
participate!

2018 Spirit of Union Winners!

Darcel and Kevin Myers are the recipients of the 2018 Spirit of Union Award. The Myers have lived in Union for more than 35 years. Read their story on page 2 of this newsletter.



Spirit of Union Award Winners Announced

Darcel and Kevin Myers are the recipients of the 2018 Spirit of Union Award.

The Myers have lived in their lovely brick-and-stucco English Tudor house at 417 N. Main Street for more than 35 years.

“We love it here. It’s small-town life. Everyone is so nice. Union is a special place,” Mrs. Myers said.

She and her husband raised their two sons here. When they first moved to town, her parents, upon visiting, also loved Union so much that they too relocated here.



*Pictured: Union residents
Darcel and Kevin Myers with Union
Mayor Michael O'Callaghan.*

Upon pulling into the Myers’ recently redone driveway, one notices the large trees, abundant bushes and blooms of flowers in the front yard. The backyard beyond gives way to scenic views of the Stillwater River Valley. The Myers several years ago had their house repainted, roof replaced and new windows installed. The two-story house is taupe and cream, complemented by flowers in shades of rust, red, orange, yellow and white. Mr. Myers planted all of the shrubs and flowers in the yard. Together, the now-retired couple works on maintaining the landscaping.

“We love it,” Mrs. Myers said. “It’s one of our top hobbies.”

The front yard features barberry bushes, lilies, spider plants, hostas, marigolds and blue bonnets. A mature crimson maple and a large evergreen also adorn the front yard. The side yard to the south features a variety of plantings, including dwarf shrubs and impatiens in pops of pink. The back yard features two decks and a lawn that slopes down toward a farm field, some woods and the river in the distance.

“The view from the backyard is what sold us on the house,” Mrs. Myers said. “It’s just so beautiful.”

The Myers credit organic gardening for the gorgeous lushness of their property, which is nearly half an acre. Their now-grown sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren live in Union and Englewood. Mrs. Myers’ father, Manuel Molina, passed away a couple of years ago but her mother, Julia Molina, still resides in town.

“We get together at least once a week as a family,” Mrs. Myers said. “It’s always been family with us.” She dedicates their Spirit of Union Award to her mother and father who both were avid gardeners. “We’re so happy that we won this award. It was a big surprise!”



Gathering Leaves this Fall? Consider Mulching Instead

The City of Union provides leaf pickup each year for people who put their leaves out by the curb. But did you know that the most environmentally sustainable practice (and the one that's best for keeping our storm-water-ways unclogged) is to mow up the leaves into a mulch and disperse the clippings evenly on the lawn.

Scott's (the fertilizer company) offers these suggestions (taken from their website): *Chop Those Leaves With Your Mower: Take the grass catcher off your mower and mow over the leaves on your lawn. You want to reduce your leaf clutter to dime-size pieces. You'll know you're done when about half an inch of grass can be seen through the mulched leaf layer.*



The website goes on to suggest spreading some high-nitrogen fertilizer after the leaves have been chopped up and dispersed. The author of this newsletter article has done this for years.

Leaving the leaves on your lawn also saves on time, effort and City budget when it comes to collecting leaves at the curb.

Some people still prefer to gather leaves and put them out by the curb. But if you do so, please avoid putting the leaves in a position where they are likely to be swept into the storm drains.

One might wonder why natural leaves pose a problem to storm drains and water ways. The answer is because, when we rake them up into a pile, we concentrate their properties into a sludge that is just too dense for nature to handle without causing other problems. If the leaves get washed into our storm drains and then into rivers or creeks, they rot in the water. When they rot in the water, the rotting leaves use up the dissolved air in the water – air that is needed by fish. The leaves might even plug up storm drains and waterways, causing little floods in the area.

The very best solution, instead of raking leaves into piles, is to use the lawn mower to mulch them into pieces, which are evenly distributed around the lawn. They will naturally decompose in the grass over the winter; plus, they'll add humus to the lawn. Humus is good for lawns as it provides an easier path for the roots in the winter and spring. Humus also assists in keeping soil from being eroded off the surface of the lawn.

A light application of high-nitrogen fertilizer late in the fall will help the lawn to decompose the leaf bits and release their nutrients into the grass root area just as the lawn begins to green up in the spring. You will be delighted with the result. And we will, too, because fewer leaf piles to collect will save the City money.

Have a nice fall, everyone!

Income Tax Preparation Assistance Available

The Central Collection Agency (CCA) handles the City of Union's income tax collection. Every year, the CCA offers times in which representatives will come to Union City Hall and meet with residents to answer tax-related questions or help them fill out their tax forms. This is a free service. Walk-in dates and by-appointment dates are listed below.

Thursday	Nov. 8, 2018, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. – walk-in, no appointment required
Monday	Jan. 7, 2019, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. – walk-in, no appointment required
Monday	March 4, 2019, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – schedule an appointment*
Saturday	March 16, 2019, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. – walk in, no appointment required
Wednesday	March 20, 2019, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. – schedule an appointment*

***To schedule an appointment with a local CCA representative, please call 216-857-7382.**

Santa Arrives for Tree-Lighting on Nov. 25!

The City of Union holds the annual tree lighting ceremony on Sunday, Nov. 25, at the City of Union Fire Station (corner of Montgomery Street and Martindale Road).

Union residents, their families and friends are invited. Arrive before 6 p.m. because Santa Claus will arrive on a fire truck at that time.

Parents can bring cameras and take pictures of Santa and their child against a seasonal backdrop. The City's Park Board and the Union Fire & Rescue Department will provide hot chocolate and cookies.

Families are welcome to bring a donation of nonperishable food and canned goods for the FISH organization or items can be dropped off at City Hall.

Improvements at Wellfield Pond

The City has continued to make improvements at the Wellfield Pond on River Road. This year, a shelter made from recycled products was constructed. Funds from the Montgomery County Solid Waste District's Recycling Incentive Grant program assisted with the shelter purchase.

The shelter has a recycled aluminum roof and recycled steel supports.

The Solid Waste District works to promote waste reduction, litter prevention and clean up, composting and end-use markets for recycled materials. Reduction of the solid waste stream and the use of recycled products play an important role in protecting our planet's environment.



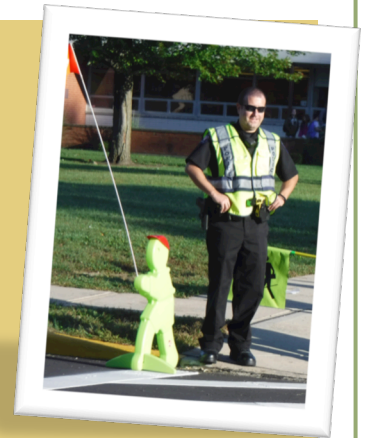
Pictured: Union's new shelter; area resident Ken Wills enjoys his day fishing at Wellfield Pond.

Please Vote Nov. 6 on Police Levy *(continued from front page)*

helping children across busy roads or walking the hallways of our school to help everyone feel safe. The City of Union is an extremely safe community to live in, and a lot of it's because of those little things that our police officers do. They are here for us, day and night, and always responsive to our needs. Criminals seem to know that the Union Police Department takes crime prevention seriously. But, as responsible citizens, we need make sure our Police Department continues to have the resources it needs to prevent crime and safeguard our citizens. I have been a resident of the City of Union for over 14 years, and I've had the opportunity to work with some of the finest police officers through the years here in Union. We are in good hands and very fortunate to have these dedicated officers protecting us. Please join me in voting "yes" on Nov. 6 on Issue 26 for the City of Union's Police Levy! – *Public Safety Director Mike Blackwell*

Police Levy Facts

- Issue 26 on the Nov. 6 ballot
- 2.5 mills additional – the first millage-rate increase since 1985
- A Police Levy was last approved by voters in 2004, however, the total property tax millage rate has never increased since 1985
- The levy would cost the owner of an \$80,000 property \$70 annually – about 19 cents per day
- The levy will generate \$258,000 annually
- The levy will support the daily operations of the Police Department
- The levy will assist the department's efforts to provide community policing at Union Elementary School
- The City's Police Department is funded solely by property taxes
- Our Police Department can no longer operate on limited revenue
- Since 2004, the number of police service calls has increased dramatically – from 4,681 calls to more than 18,000 calls in 2017



WHERE TO VOTE

If you are a Union resident and live in Montgomery County:

For Precincts A and B:

Englewood Assembly of God, 415 North Main Street, Englewood, Ohio 45322

For Precincts C and D:

Union United Methodist Church, 222 Shaw Road, Union, Ohio 45322

If you are a Union resident and live in Miami County:

Community Grace Brethren Church, 2261 South Miami Street, West Milton, Ohio 45383

If you want to obtain an Ohio Absentee Ballot, you can contact the Secretary of State at 1-877-767-6446 or at www.ohioSecretaryofState.gov. Montgomery County Board of Elections phone number: 937-225-5656. Miami County Board of Elections phone number is 927-330-2900.

Voting precincts / polls are open Nov. 6, from 6:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m.



The City of Union Newsletter

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Mayor Michael O'Callaghan

836-0177

Vice Mayor John Bruns

832-0912

Councilwoman Colette Huggins

846-6261

Councilman David Blackwell

470-6695

Councilwoman Jean Kyle

832-2811

Councilwoman Helen Oberer

832-3269

Councilwoman Robin Perkins

832-3902

Waste Collection Reminders!

Christmas Day: Tuesday, Dec. 25, 2018
Collection will be on Wednesday.

New Year's Day: Tuesday, Jan. 1, 2019
Collection will be on Wednesday.

THE CITY OF UNION NEWSLETTER

FALL 2018

Fall Leaf Pickup

Union's leaf pickup will start the week of Oct. 15 and conclude the week of Nov. 19. Important info for raking your leaves for leaf pickup are at <http://www.ci.union.oh.us/index.php/departments/detail/leaf-collection/>



Snow Emergencies

During snow emergencies or heavy snow, vehicles must be removed from the street for at least 24 hours to allow crews to remove snow. Heavy snow means a snowfall with an average depth of 2 inches or more; drifting conditions are also considered heavy snow. Vehicles interfering with snow removal operations may be ticketed by police. Go online to find ways you can help City crews when the snow falls: <http://bit.ly/uDWqR9>.

