

ISSUE 30 — SPRING 2019

SHELBY COUNTY Sizzles



Shelby County is celebrating its Bicentennial in 2019 followed by the City of Sidney's Bicentennial in 2020. All festivities will celebrate the rich history of Sidney and Shelby County.

Patriotic Concert, featuring Wright Patterson Air Force Rock Band

June 7, 7:00 pm
County Courthouse Lawn
(Bring your lawn chairs.)

Transportation's Critical Role in Shelby County History, by Scott Trustle

June 13, 7:00 to 8:30 pm
Shelby Co. Historical Society

Anthony McLain Memorial Cruise In

June 29, 12:00 to 5:00 pm
Tawawa Park

Sidney Civic Band Concert and Fireworks Display

July 4
Sidney

Lois Lenski, Storycatcher, by author, Bonnie Malone

July 14, 2:00 to 4:00 pm
St. Jacob Lutheran Church,
101 W. Main, Anna, OH

Details can be found on the Visitor's Bureau web site, VisitSidneyShelby.com, and on Facebook at Shelby County Ohio Bicentennial Celebration.

Moving Forward on Placemaking Initiative

Late last year the Sidney-Shelby Economic Partnership began an Economic Development Visioning process to identify our shared priorities and vision for the future of Sidney and Shelby County. One of the priorities identified was to launch a formal placemaking initiative in our community. To date, much time has been invested in gathering information, including a number of focus groups. Much of this edition of Shelby Sizzles is focused on current projects and accomplishments, including three new restaurants in the county.

Recently, in his presentation at the Chamber Annual Meeting, President Jeff Raible described Placemaking as "creating a sense of place where people want to LIVE, to VISIT, and to WORK, all the things we concern ourselves with to enhance the fabric of our community."

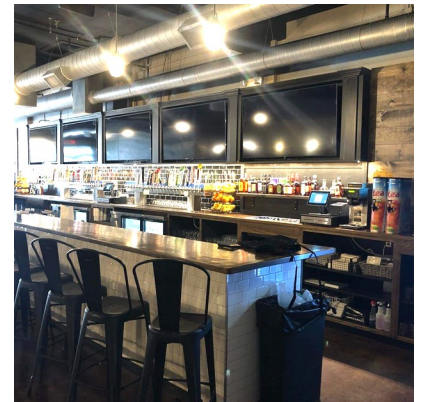
Raible went on to discuss all the extensive collaboration that is necessary to successfully move forward on this initiative. We hope you will spend a few minutes reading the articles in this edition as we explore current redevelopment efforts in downtown Sidney and new exciting restaurant amenities throughout the county. The process has begun and we look forward to the opportunities ahead!

Murphy's — An Example of Placemaking

A good example of placemaking is the opening of Murphy's Craft Bar + Kitchen in downtown Sidney. The restaurant boasts a unique menu and 48 taps behind the bar. The restaurant was the first to utilize one of the 15 liquor licenses available to restaurants through the city's new Revitalization District. The district will include a combination of entertainment, retail, educational, sporting, social, cultural, or arts establishments within a specific boundary.

"This district makes it easier for new restaurants to emerge in downtown Sidney. It opens up the area for more opportunities for business expansions, jobs, and more choices for citizens and visitors to experience. Adding more food and drink options to the downtown will, in turn, increase foot traffic which will support more retail," said Amy Breinich, Executive Director of Sidney Alive.

The downtown area has seen several projects over the last several months. Work on the Ohio Building is well underway. Once completed, the building will be ready for an investor to come in and make it their own. Three storefronts directly south of the Ohio Building have renovation projects underway, one being a beauty salon. KB's Tap House renovated the front façade, with help from the city's Downtown Rehab Program. Many more revitalization projects are in the pipeline in the coming months. A strong, downtown entertainment district is key to the Sidney-Shelby placemaking initiative.



A Formula for Success – Hospice Nurse Turns Entrepreneur

You may have heard the saying, "Choose a job you love, and you'll never work a day in your life." Well, such is the case for Susie Wilkins, who in September of last year left her job as a Hospice nurse and devoted her full time attention to operating her own café and catering business.



For more than 20 years Susie had been operating a catering business in her "spare" time. One day a patient asked, "Beyond your dedication to Hospice, what makes you really happy?" Susie replied, "Cooking for and feeding people, making them happy though my food, is what makes me happy." It was in that moment that Susie decided to change direction and pursue a career in the catering and restaurant business.

Susie acquired a terrific location that was previously home to a restaurant at 205 West Pike Street in Jackson Center. Renovations to this space are ongoing, as is the installation of new equipment. Split Decision Catering and Split Decision Café are the names Susie decided upon for her new businesses. She describes the café as family friendly. In addition to pizza, subs & sliders, patrons can choose from an ample beer and wine selection too. A new and expanded menu is under development and planned for May.

According to Susie, "Life never slows down. If there is something that truly makes you happy, you should follow your heart and try, because I don't want to live with the regret of not knowing what if."

You can follow Split Decision Catering and Split Decision Café on Facebook [@blueribbonfood](https://www.facebook.com/blueribbonfood) or on the World Wide Web at www.splitdecisioncatering.com.

Building Improvements at Anna Local Schools

Thirty to forty additional useful years. That's what the resident's of the Anna Local School District are anticipating once their \$20,000,000 remodeling project is completed. Approximately \$3,000,000 is being spent at the elementary facility, primarily to improve security and update the heating and ventilation system in the 25 year old building. Work at the elementary is to take place during the summer of 2019 with much of the coordination being provided by Westerheide Construction.



More challenging is the \$17,000,000 renovation to the middle school / high school building. Sturdily built following the 1937 earthquake that destroyed the previous structure and with additions in 1964, 1972, and 1999, the 120,000 square foot facility needed attention. It will have a new roof and a new heating system. For the first time, the entire building will be air conditioned. There are new security features, a special education suite, a new kitchen and much more. The goal is to balance cosmetic improvements, structural necessities, and enhance educational opportunities - all within the financial framework. Half of the money is being provided by the state and, half is being supplied by local taxpayers through a 17-year tax levy. The logistics are challenging, but having temporary extra classrooms in a permanent building constructed by Wells Brothers, enables Anna Schools to stay open during their occupied renovation. Construction and instruction take place not only at the same time, but often next to each other and is a test for the contractors and a testament to the flexibility of Anna students and staff.

Noll-Fisher of Anna is a major contractor and is gearing up for an intense summer construction season with work scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2020. After that? Thirty to forty useful years!



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Las Tapatias – A Restaurant for Everyone

The new operators of Las Tapatias Mexican Restaurant have great ideas and big plans for their newly acquired business. Jonathan and Juan are no strangers to the restaurant trade. Both are the sons of Mexican immigrant parents and grew up in family owned and operated restaurants since the age of 14.



Las Tapatias offers traditional Mexican cuisine in a festive, family friendly environment. Tacos, burritos, chimichangas, and fajitas are their specialty along with a wonderful

selection of family recipes inspired by generations of Tex-Mex influences. Jonathan and Juan are committed to operating their restaurant where all can enjoy a delicious, home cooked meal prepared with traditional Mexican flavors and offered at affordable prices.

Las Tapatias features a full bar with some of the best margaritas you'll taste anywhere. The restaurant opens daily at 11:00 a.m. and is located at 1306 Wapakoneta Avenue in Sidney.

Drink and dinner specials are offered weekly. On the [Las Tapatias Facebook Page](#) you can view their incredible menu offering a wide variety of authentic Mexican entrees.

Airtow Relocates to Spec Building in Botkins

The Village of Botkins is excited to announce the arrival of Airtow, <https://airtow.com/>, to the Botkins Industrial Park. Airtow moved into a 20,000 square foot manufacturing facility this spring, bringing with them new jobs and growth for the Village of Botkins. Airtow manufactures drop deck trailers with ground loading technology. The addition of Airtow's facility in Botkins brings more jobs and economic activity to the village in a multiplicative manner. The village truly benefits from each job as workers enjoy our restaurants, shop at local stores, and visit other local area businesses. The village is excited to have Airtow as a part of our community and is looking forward to their success.

Airtow's building was constructed as a spec building at the Botkins Industrial Park. The Botkins Investment Group,

comprised of community members, chose to invest in their own backyard and hit a



home run with their spec building. The investment group is planning to build a second 30,000 square foot spec building expected to be finished by the end of 2019!

The Village of Botkins is committed to managed economic development. With close access to Interstate 75, great tax incentives, and plenty of available land the Botkins Industrial Park is open for business!

Skilled Trades Ninja Competition

In Fall 2017, at the request of Sharon Maurice, a teacher at Sidney High School, three partners of Workforce Partnership joined together to build a traveling Skilled Trades Ninja Course for students to compete with each other and learn how to use hand tools in the construction, HVAC, and electrical trades. It has become very popular with the students!

The inaugural Ninja Madness Tournament was held at Upper Valley Career Center on May 7. The students with

winning times at their local competitions were invited to participate. This hands-on activity introduced students to career possibilities in skilled trades. Pictured below are the top three finishers for the boys' and girls' brackets.

Kudos to Mrs. Maurice for her great idea, and to Area Energy & Electric, Slagle Mechanical and Ferguson Construction for investing their time and resources in Shelby County!



Students competed to complete the Skilled Trades Ninja course with the fastest time.



*Gold—Nick Zerkle, Sidney
Silver—Jude Schmiesing, Holy Angels
Bronze—Darius Boeke, Sidney*



*Gold—Carley Scott, Russia
Silver—Kelsey Robinson, Fort Loramie
Bronze—Ava Turner, Fort Loramie*

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Thank you to our contributors:

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* For a free digital copy of Shelby Sizzles, please visit www.choosesidneyshelby.com

Steady Progress for Workforce Partnership of Shelby County 2014-2019



16,484 student
INTERACTIONS

4,671 students
enrolled

5,813 Career-a-
Month activity
participants

7 classrooms
established

3,725 Career
Exploration Academy
HANDS-ON participants

343 attended
RECRUITING
events

1,738 engaged with
HometownOpportunity.com



Above: Job Signing Recognition for Nathan Dulaney (with Lochar, Inc..) and Jazzlynn Hall (with American Trim);
Below: Industry Interview Day for students in grades 9 to 12.

