



Lake Views

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 4 - FALL 2026

LAKE VIEWS IS THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE RESIDENTS OF LAKE COUNTY

Commissioners Expand Partnership with the Lake Humane Society

Lake County is expanding its partnership with the Lake Humane Society as part of its ongoing commitment to animal welfare and community collaboration.

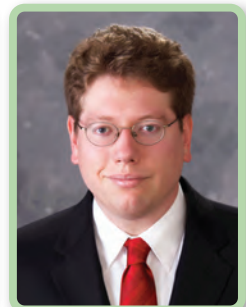
"We are encouraged by the positive steps Lake County leadership has taken to strengthen operations at the Dog Shelter and are optimistic about what we can accomplish together moving forward," said Duke Murphy, Interim Executive Director of the Lake Humane Society. "While Lake Humane Society and the Dog Shelter serve different roles in our community, we share a common commitment to the well-being of the dogs in our care. We look forward to continuing our partnership and working together to ensure every dog receives the humane care they deserve."



COMMISSIONER / President
MORRIS BEVERAGE III



COMMISSIONER
MORGAN R. MCINTOSH



COMMISSIONER
JOHN PLECNIK



Under the enhanced partnership, a team from the Lake Humane Society will be onsite at the Lake County Dog Shelter each week to assist staff and help ensure the health, comfort, and well-being of the dogs in the shelter's care.

The Lake County Board of Commissioners appreciates Lake Humane Society's staff and volunteers for their dedication and collaboration. Board President Commissioner Morris W. Beverage III added, "Together, we remain committed to ensuring the highest standard of care for animals in Lake County. By working together, Lake County and the Lake Humane Society are building on a shared mission to provide compassionate care while creating positive outcomes for dogs awaiting their forever homes." ■

Lake County Utilities Hosts Special Recycling Collection

The Lake County Department of Utilities, the Ohio State University Extension and the Solid Waste District Team are preparing for the years final Household Hazardous Waste Collection. The event will take place on **Saturday Sept. 12th from 8am to 2pm at the Lake County Fairgrounds** and is exclusive to Lake County residents. Accepted items include most automotive and household cleaners; lawn, pool and unknown chemicals; lightbulbs and batteries; aerosols, empty propane tanks, kerosene, mercury, paints (oil-based), polyurethanes, primers and grout; roofing tars, shellacs, stains, thinners, turpentine and varnish. Prohibited items include ammunition, explosives, latex paint (let it dry out then toss it), medical waste, prescription medicines, and smoke alarms (mail to manufacturer). There are no fees associated with this collection. Visitors simply pull into the Fairgrounds and remain in their vehicles while a dedicated collection team removes the items. All household hazardous waste collected during this event will be recycled or destroyed safely.

For additional information, please contact the LC Dept. of Utilities at (440) 350-2645. ■





Meet the New Lake County Health Commissioner

The Lake County General Health District (LCGHD) is proud to announce the appointment of Adam Litke as the new Lake County Health Commissioner that will lead public health policy, programming, and services in the county. Litke holds a Master of Public Health degree from Kent State University and has over 12 years of public health experience.

Litke plans to advance community wellness by promoting active lifestyles and healthy eating habits as foundational pillars for the populations he serves. He prioritizes the growth of strategic partnerships with local schools, hospitals, and government entities to foster a collaborative, community-wide approach to public health. He also aims to ensure that residents have access to the resources and support necessary to lead healthy, active lives. "I am here not just to lead, but to listen, collaborate, and work right alongside you to build on Lake County's natural resource assets and drive lasting improvements in the wellbeing of every resident," commented Litke. "Together, we can ensure this community remains a place where individuals and our families can thrive for generations to come."

ADAM LITKE

Lake County
Health Commissioner

A Cool Weather Reminder

As fall and winter bring cooler temperatures, LCGHD is reminding everyone to protect themselves from sources of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning. According to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than 400 Americans die from unintentional CO poisoning each year. Over 20,000 Americans visit the emergency room

and more than 4,000 Americans are hospitalized every year due to CO poisoning. CO is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. CO is found in combustion fumes such as those produced by furnaces, water heaters, small gasoline engines, stoves, generators, lanterns, and gas ranges or by burning charcoal and wood.

The most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. People who are sleeping or who have been drinking alcohol can die from CO poisoning before they ever show any symptoms.

The following tips are helpful in preventing accidental CO poisoning:

- Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician each year.
- Have at least one working carbon monoxide detector. Check the detector's batteries twice annually at the same time smoke detector batteries are checked. If the detector goes off, leave your home immediately and call 911. Also, check the end of life date on the detector as it may need to be replaced.
- If you think you have CO poisoning or are feeling dizzy, lightheaded, or nauseous, seek medical attention immediately.



- Do NOT use generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning products inside a home, basement, garage, camper, or even outside near an open window. This is especially important to remember during a power outage.
- Do NOT warm up or run a vehicle inside an attached garage (even if you leave the garage door open). Make sure to always shut off vehicles when parking in a garage.
- Do NOT burn anything in a stove or fireplace that is not vented.
- Do NOT heat your house with a gas oven.

If you have questions about CO poisoning,

Call the Lake County General Health District at (440) 350-2543 or visit the CDC's website at [cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide](https://www.cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide). ■



Transforming Lawn to Meadow at Caley Home

The Lake Soil and Water Conservation District (Lake SWCD) recently partnered with Lake County Job and Family Services (JFS), Lake County Buildings and Grounds (B&G), and local resident Benjamin Mordush to complete a native meadow restoration project at the Emma Caley Receiving Home in Painesville. The project converted approximately three acres of high-maintenance lawn into a diverse planting of native grasses and wildflowers designed to reduce stormwater runoff and provide valuable habitat for pollinators and wildlife. The Caley Home is a county-operated facility run by JFS that provides temporary, supportive care for children and adolescents. It is an ideal location to showcase economic and sustainable land management practices on public property.

Lake SWCD worked closely with Mordush throughout the project while the B&G Department played a critical role in preparing the site. It includes a mowed walking path through the meadow for residents to enjoy, a grass buffer along the path to protect the planting and improve aesthetics, and a diverse mix of wildflowers that will provide colorful blooms throughout the growing season. Mordush generously donated the funds needed to purchase the native seed mix for the project.

When asked what inspired him to get involved, he shared that as a resident and taxpayer, he felt there was a better alternative to maintaining such a large lawn area. "By creating an attractive, lower-maintenance pollinator meadow, it becomes a cost savings to the county in mowing and maintenance," Mordush explained. "It also creates a beautiful habitat for birds, butterflies, and pollinators of all sizes—a wildlife corridor. It's something nice to look at while driving by and it gives the residents of Caley Home a place to walk, de-stress, and even learn about nature."

When asked what motivated his involvement, Superintendent Mark Iafelice explained that the project aligned closely with his professional background and long-term vision for the property. "With 30 years of experience in landscape construction and a passion for plants and design, this project felt like a natural fit," Iafelice said. "The interior of Caley Home has already seen meaningful improvements and enhancing the exterior felt like the next important step. Improving the outdoor environment gives the children a pleasant space to sit, walk, and explore while transforming an unused field into something the community can enjoy while driving past and take pride in." Iafelice also expressed appreciation for County Administrator Jason Boyd and JFS Director Suzanne Casar for their support of the project and noted that similar projects could be replicated at other county properties in the future.

While the meadow is not open to the public, it serves as a visual example of how converting traditional lawn to native meadow can deliver both environmental and social benefits and helps encourage broader adoption of sustainable landscaping throughout Lake County.

If you are interested in converting a portion of your lawn to a native meadow, you can contact Lake SWCD at lakecountyohio.gov/swcd or call (440) 350-2730 to learn more about resources and available assistance. ■

Did you know...

that in Lake County, our stormwater flows to Lake Erie untreated. Rainwater begins its journey by flowing into storm sewers and roadside ditches, then it continues through underground pipes to a nearby stream ultimately ending in Lake Erie without being cleaned. Different pollutants can collect in the stormwater as it makes its way to the lake. The Lake County Stormwater Management Department assists member communities manage the stormwater program, ensure regulatory compliance, and complete infrastructure improvements in order to reduce flooding and improve water quality.

To learn more about our member communities and how to keep stormwater clean in your neighborhood, visit lakecountyohio.gov/smd.





LAKE COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION

YOUR VETERANS SERVICE COMMISSION CONTINUES TO SERVE THOSE THAT SERVED...

Remember, we are not the VA (the federal agency); we are the Veterans Service Commission, a county agency. We assist Veterans in navigating the VA healthcare and claims systems and in obtaining other benefits owed to our Veterans. This is the promise made by our country to always provide help to Veterans that are suffering because of their military service – it is a sacred oath. All services are provided at no charge.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

So far this year, we've assisted 96 Veterans and their families with just over \$188,000 in emergency financial assistance. This assistance is mandated by Ohio law dating to 1886 and represents one of the first states to recognize the importance of taking care of our own and those who protect our freedom daily.

TRANSPORTATION

The Veterans Service Commission provides **FREE** door-to-door transportation services for Lake County Veterans (& spouse/aide) to and from medical appointments including dialysis, adult day care, therapy, and to the VAMC in Cleveland or anywhere Laketrans travels including our office. Veterans are required to register their DD-214 with our office in order to receive free rides. Reservations are required. Just call Laketrans at (440) 354-6100 no less than 2 days prior to the appointment. If you are a Veteran/spouse and lack transportation to or from work, please contact our office. We may be able to assist. This year alone we've assisted 2,326 Veterans and spouses/aids with 4,652 medical transports.

ARE YOU ENROLLED IN VA HEALTHCARE?

A lot of Veterans qualify for VA healthcare but aren't aware of it. Enrolling is easier than you might think. If you served in the military and did not receive a dishonorable discharge, you may be eligible. The VA determines eligibility based on length of service, service connected disabilities (sometimes even at 0%), income, combat service, certain special statuses (former POWs, Purple Heart recipients), or those exposed to hazards like burn pits or Agent Orange.

Once enrolled, Veterans can access a full range of services including primary care, mental health support, preventive care, women's health, specialty care, prescriptions, emergency room and inpatient care, hospice and even urgent care. Depending on your priority group, many of these services come at little or no cost.

Enrollment can be done online, by phone, by mail, or at the VA Outpatient Clinic in Willoughby or the VA Medical Center in Cleveland but we encourage you to reach out to our office first. Call to make an appointment and we will help you complete your application, submit and track it, and review your service to see if you qualify for additional benefits. Bring all your important papers including your DD214 or discharge documents, personal identification, health insurance information, and all household income details. Please note VA healthcare provides medical care, not health insurance and care at private medical facilities is rarely covered by the VA.

SERVICES AND CLAIMS WORK

We've had a minimum of 7,769

contacts with Veterans or dependents so far this year! This includes 806 in-person contacts, 3,067 phone calls, 2,984 emails, 324 formal claim referrals, 275 other benefit type contacts and 1,894 claims forms prepared for different VA benefits. These include 355 clients we registered our office as their representative, 338 claims for benefits, 126 Supplemental claims and 85 appeals. VA paid our Veterans \$91,397,384 dollars in fiscal 2024!

WHAT IS A SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY?

A service-connected disability requires three pieces. First, you must be currently diagnosed with a disability. Second, you must have had an illness, injury, or disease that occurred during your service. Finally, there must be a link from that illness, injury or disease in service to your present diagnosis which is called the nexus. In some instances, the VA will presume you were exposed to certain things in service that will absolve a Veteran from providing proof of in-service illness, injury or disease, and the nexus is presumed to be linked to your current disability. For instance, an in-country Vietnam Veteran is presumed to have been exposed to Agent Orange which is a slang term used for highly toxic defoliants used in Vietnam. Exposure to burn pits during certain periods and at specific locations is another example. These are far too extensive to explain here so if you are a Veteran, the spouse of a Veteran, or a survivor of a deceased Veteran, please contact our office.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Email: veterans@lakecountyohio.gov,
Call (440) 350-2904, or visit us at
lakecountyohio.gov/veteran-services/.
We thank you for your service and are honored to serve you! ■



VOTE WITH CONFIDENCE IN LAKE COUNTY

As we prepare for the November 3rd General Election, our Lake County Board of Elections office remains committed to ensuring that every voter has a secure, accessible, and convenient voting experience. We have outlined several important reminders below.

When planning to cast a ballot in person (whether early voting at the Lake County Board of Elections or at your polling location on Election Day), it's helpful to remember Ohio's photo ID requirements.

Registered voters must bring one of the following valid and unexpired forms of photo identification:

- **Ohio driver's license**
- **Ohio state identification card**
- **U.S. passport or passport card**
- **U.S. military ID card, U.S. military dependent ID card, Ohio National Guard ID card, or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs ID card**
- **Ohio BMV issued interim identification form**



For 2026, the Ohio Secretary of State will again send absentee ballot request forms to every registered voter; a practice traditionally used during larger even year general elections.

Only voters who would like to vote by mail should complete this form. After voters return the completed forms, the Lake County Board of Elections will mail absentee ballots to the address associated with each voter. This provides a convenient and secure way to vote early from home. Completed absentee ballots may be returned by mail or placed in the secure 24 hour drop box located outside the Lake County Board of Elections. Early in person voting will be available throughout October and will conclude Sunday November 1, 2026. An Early Voting schedule can be found on our website at lakecountyohio.gov/boe. All regular polling locations will be open on Election Day, Tuesday Nov. 3, 2026.

Poll worker recruitment continues to be a major priority in Lake County. Each election depends on dedicated poll workers to greet voters, verify IDs, assist with voting equipment, and help maintain a safe and orderly environment at each polling place. Poll workers are paid for their service and training is provided by the Lake County Board of Elections. This is



a meaningful way for residents, students, retirees, working adults, and anyone interested in serving the community to support the democratic process. Many poll workers report it to be a rewarding experience and enjoy engaging with neighbors across the county.

As November approaches, Lake County voters are encouraged to contact the Board of Elections for election related information or to inquire about serving as Precinct Election Officials. You should be aware that several groups not affiliated with the Board of Elections have been sending election related mail using outdated or inaccurate registration data. To avoid confusion and for reliable information, we encourage you to verify your registration status directly at voteohio.gov. Here at the Lake County Board of Elections, we remain dedicated to supporting our community and ensuring a secure, transparent, and well run election process. ■

Ohio Votes Count

The state of Ohio has taken part in 55 U.S. presidential elections, voting for the nationwide winner in 45 of these elections, giving a success rate of 82 percent. With this high success rate and relatively high number of electoral votes, Ohio has generally been viewed as a battleground state throughout U.S. history. Before 2020, Ohio had voted for the overall winner in every election since 1964, and had only failed to choose the winner in three elections since 1888. ■ Sourced from www.Statista.com



The Lake County
Board of Commissioners
105 Main Street
Painesville, OH 44077

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LOCAL POSTAL CUSTOMER

The Growing Need for Foster Parents in Lake County

Every day in Lake County, children and teens show extraordinary resilience in the face of difficult circumstances. What they need most is simple but powerful: a safe, supportive place to call home. As the number of youth entering care continues to rise, Lake County is seeking compassionate individuals and families willing to open their hearts and homes as foster parents.

Becoming a foster parent isn't about being perfect. It's about being present. It's offering comfort during uncertainty, encouragement during tough moments, and a belief in brighter days ahead. A

nurturing home can profoundly shape a child's future, and that impact lasts a lifetime.

Lake County's foster parents come from all walks of life. Some are single adults, some are couples, some have children already, and others are just beginning their parenting journey. The common thread among them is a commitment to making a meaningful difference.

When children thrive, our entire community grows stronger. "When a child finds stability in a foster home, they find hope," says Suzanne Casar, Director of Lake County Job and Family Services. "Every foster parent becomes a vital part of a child's story—

helping them heal, grow, and believe in their own potential. Our community is stronger when we stand together for kids."

If you've ever wondered whether you could make a meaningful impact, now is a wonderful time to explore fostering. Lake County Job and Family Services offers training, guidance, and ongoing support, ensuring families feel confident and connected every step of the way.

A safe and caring home can change everything. The need is real and so is the opportunity to bring hope to a child's life.

Contact 440-350-4218 to learn more.

2026 LAKE COUNTY FALL EVENTS



SEPTEMBER

LAKE COUNTY FALL FOLIAGE TOUR
September - November; self-driven
FAIRPORT HARBOR HARBORITAVILLE
Sunday, 6th, 12-7pm
**42ND ANNUAL LAKE ERIE
DART ASSOCIATION CLASSIC**
10-13th, Holiday Inn Mentor
25TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9-11
Friday 11th, Eastlake City Hall
HOLA OHIO TACO FESTIVAL
Veterans Park Painesville
Saturday 12th, 10:30am to 8:00pm
**ROCK THE MANSION
"THE PRINCE PROJECT"**
Saturday 12th, 5-10:30pm
Coulby Mansion Wickliffe

**MENTOR-ON-THE-LAKE
FALL FESTIVAL**
Saturday 12th, 1-7pm, City Hall
VILLAGE PEDDLER FESTIVAL
12-13th, Lake Metroparks Farmpark
PERRY FALL FESTIVAL
Saturday 12th, 11-9:30pm - Lee Lydic Park
HEADLANDS BIRDING FESTIVAL
18th-20th, 9601 Headlands Rd. Mentor
SKELETON GROVE
Holden Arboretum Kirtland
September 19th - November 1st

For further information, reach out to Tour Lake County at their website at tourlakecounty.com, via phone at (440) 975-1234, or find them on social media.

OCTOBER

TRICK OR TREAT
WINE & COCKTAIL TRAIL
October 1-31st
Select Grand River Valley wineries
MADISON OKTOBERFEST
Saturday 3rd, 1-7pm
Bill Stanton Park 1-7pm
HOWL-O-WEEN DOG PARTY
Friday 9th, 5:30pm
Hopkins Rd Dog Park, Mentor
PAINESVILLE FALL FEST
Saturday 10th - 3-6pm
Kiwans Recreation Park
**KIRTLAND'S HALLOWEEN
TOWN CENTER**
Saturday 24th, 4:30 pm
Kirtland City Hall
**TRICK OR TREAT TRAIL
PUMPKIN CHUNKIN**
Saturday 24th
Osborne Park, Willoughby
**LAKE COUNTY
HOT CHOCOLATE TRAIL**
Begins October 28th