

Bath Township

QUARTERLY

FALL 2025 | VOLUME 32, ISSUE 4



3864 West Bath Road | P.O.Box 1188 | Akron, Ohio 44333 | (330) 666-4007



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Meeting and event information is available on the township website. Please visit www.bathtownship.org and select BATH COMMUNITY EVENTS on the home page.

- 10/1 Fairlawn Rotary: 7:30 am Viscous Biscuit (every Wednesday morning)
- 10/1 Bath Gamma Garden Club: 7 pm Hale Farm & Village; Botanical Healing Properties
- 10/2 Bath Richfield Kiwanis: 6 pm Fellowship Hall (every Thursday evening)
- 10/4 Fall into Nature: 11-3 pm Bath Nature Preserve at University of Akron Field Station
- 10/7 Bath Business Association: 12 pm Bath United Church of Christ; speaker David Axson
- 10/14 Discover Bath Barns: 5 pm Bath United Church of Christ
- 10/18 Camp Christopher Fall Festival: 1-6 pm Camp Christopher
- 10/26 Bath Halloween Open House: 3-5 pm Bath Township Fire Department
- 10/26 Bath Township Trick or Treat: 5-7 pm, participating households should leave lights on
- 11/4 Election Day: voter registration polling place information at www.boe.ohio.gov/summit/
- 11/4 Bath Gamma Garden Club: 7 pm Hale Farm & Village; Fall Make and Take project
- 11/12 Heritage Corridors of Bath: 4:30 pm Trustee Conference Room
- 11/14 Bath Volunteers for Service Trivia and Tacos: 5:30 pm St. George's Fellowship Center
- 11/20 Bath Volunteers for Service Blood Drive: 12:30-5:30 pm Bath United Church of Christ
- 11/28 Wye Road Bridge Lighting and Santa's Arrival: 6-7 pm The Bake Shop in Ghent
- 12/2 Bath Business Association: 5:30 pm Trustee Meeting Room
- 12/3 Bath Gamma Garden Club: 6 pm Hale Farm & Village; Annual Holiday Party
- 12/5 Bath Business Association: 6 pm Bath United Church of Christ; Annual Holiday Party
- 12/9 Discover Bath Barns: 5 pm Location TBD

TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
3864 West Bath Road - 330-666-4007

CORRECTIONS:

- The 8/9/25 issue of the Akron Beacon Journal incorrectly reported that Bath has a renewal levy on the November ballot for police services. Bath Township does not have any issues on the ballot this year.
- The 8/21/25 issue of the Cleveland Plain Dealer used AI generated content to report on crime statistics. In that article, Bath Township (as well as other communities) crime rates were inaccurate. Accurate crime statistics were reported in the Best Places to Live May issue of Cleveland Magazine.

DIRECTORY

ADMINISTRATION.....330-666-4007
FIRE (NON- EMERGENCY).....330-666-3738
SERVICE/PARKS.....330-665-5066
POLICE (NON-EMERGENCY).330-666-3736
RUMPKE (Solid Waste).....800-828-8171

EMERGENCIES DIAL 9-1-1

REPORT A CONCERN

Did you know? Residents have the ability to report a concern through the Bath Township website under the "How Do I" tab. Resident concerns will then be directed to the appropriate department. A staff member will reply within 3-5 business days via the preferred contact method.

BATH TOWNSHIP ELECTED OFFICIALS

Board of Trustees:

Elaina E. Goodrich, President
egoodrich@bathtownship.org

Sharon A. Troike, Vice-President
stroike@bathtownship.org

Sean F. Gaffney, Trustee
sgaffney@bathtownship.org

Fiscal Officer:

Laura Tuttle
ltuttle@bathtownship.org



Aurelian

AI Dispatch for Non-Emergency Calls

The Bath Township Police Department is proud to announce the full implementation of the Aurelian AI Dispatch system, known as AVA, for handling non-emergency calls. Funded largely through wireless 9-1-1 fees collected by Summit County, this initiative is designed to improve efficiency and enhance community safety by streamlining the way residents connect with police, fire, and township services.

It is important to note that all emergency 9-1-1 calls will continue to be routed immediately to a live dispatcher. The AI system is focused solely on non-emergency calls, such as:

- Records requests
- Disabled vehicles
- General police and fire department inquiries
- Transfers to township offices or internal department staff
- Other non-emergency community service requests

AVA engages callers with a series of targeted questions to collect accurate and detailed information. This information is then transcribed in real time and made visible to dispatchers, ensuring that the appropriate services can be dispatched quickly and effectively.



One of the key benefits of Aurelian AI Dispatch is its ability to support dispatchers during peak call times. In the event of a storm, major traffic crash, or other high-demand situation, call centers can quickly become overwhelmed. AVA steps in to handle non-emergency calls, allowing live dispatchers to focus their full attention on true emergencies.

The system is also designed with safety in mind. AVA can detect changes in a caller's voice inflection or information that suggests a situation has become urgent. In such cases, the call is immediately transferred to a live dispatcher for emergency response.

Because the system learns and improves with each interaction, police and dispatch administrators are working closely with Aurelian representatives to fine-tune its performance and ensure it meets the needs of Bath Township.

We ask for the community's patience as we transition to this new system. The Bath Township Police Department's priority is to maintain community safety and ensure that emergency calls receive the fastest, most effective response possible. By handling non-emergency calls more efficiently, Aurelian's AVA allows dispatchers to focus where they are needed most – on emergencies.

The Bath Township Police Department appreciates the community's cooperation and support as this new tool becomes part of daily operations.

COME CELEBRATE FALL'S SPLENDOR!

The University of Akron Field Station, the Bath Park Board and Bath Township invite young and old to enjoy the afternoon at Fall into Nature on Saturday, October 4 from 11AM - 3PM. This free, family-friendly event targets activities for kindergarten through eighth grade students including hayrides, making scarecrows, a pumpkin patch, face and pumpkin painting.

Timed events are:

- 11:30-Blessing of the Dogs (or bring a photo or toy)
- 11:30-Bird Identification Walk
- 12:00 and 1:15-Akron Zoo Mobile
- 2:00-Collect Insects Walk
- 2:30-Drawing for two bikes

Keith Barnett will serenade on his guitar. You can watch Donald Witt, a pumpkin carver, sculpt masterpieces. The Fire Department invites youngsters to challenge themselves at the obstacle course. The Summit County Astronomy Club will allow people to view the sun through the solar scope provided the weather cooperates.

Now is your chance to learn about the interesting and varied endeavors going on at the University of Akron Field Station. Dr. Lara Rocketenetz, Field Station Director, has organized hands-on activities and exhibits.

A true community event, Fall into Nature is possible through generous donations and participation from local Bath community associations. Area youth groups will volunteer their time to lend a hand at the hay wagon loading site, face painting booth, and pumpkin painting tables.

Does fall weather stir your appetite? DJ's Snack Shack and Papa Bears Ice Cream will be available for purchase.

If you have never been to Bath Nature Preserve enter the park trailhead at 4240 Ira Road where parking is available. Free shuttles will take you from the lot to the event site. There is handicap parking at the field station.

Speaking of Bath Nature Preserve, this 411-acre gem, once part of the Raymond Firestone Estate, holds a rich history. Acquired by Bath Township in 1997 through a bond issue, the preserve has been a beloved community space since 2001. Known for its 7 ½ miles of trails, including the paved North Fork Trail, the preserve also boasts a community garden with forty plots. But that is not all; it is home to the Summit County Astronomy Club's celestial observatory, equipped with ten telescopes for stargazing enthusiasts! For additional information, please visit bathtownship.org or e-mail or the Visit Bath Parks page on Facebook.

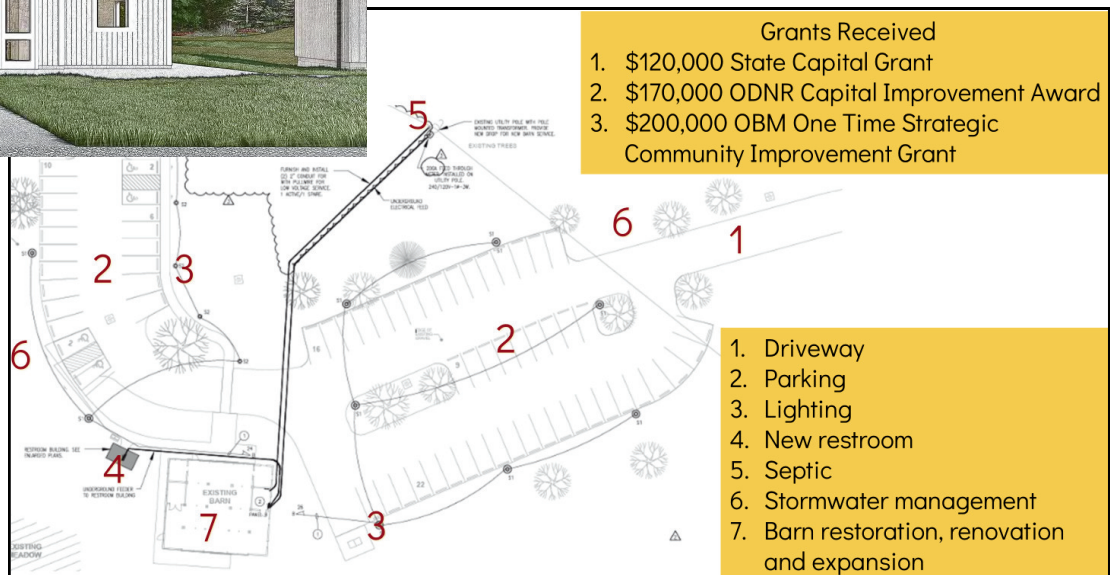


NORTH FORK PRESERVE OF BATH

At the September 8, 2025 Bath Township Trustee meeting, Hummel Construction was approved as the winning bid for the North Fork Preserve Barn Project. Although the project will rehabilitate, renovate, and expand the barn, the majority of the project cost will be put into improved infrastructure in the North Fork Preserve of Bath park property.

The land was transferred to Bath Township from the Trust for Public Land in 2020 through an agreement with the Lemmon Trust. This agreement included a grant from the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund in the amount of \$1,650,000 and did not use any township funds. Since owning the land, drastic improvements have been made to the trail network on the 78 acre park property. This next phase will include completing the new septic system, constructing a stand alone restroom with two bays and flush toilets, stormwater management, a widened and paved driveway, expanded parking, lighting, and the expansion and renovation of the historic barn. The improvements in this project will provide the township with a long-desired community space available for meetings, special events, community gatherings, and much more.

Discussions for creating a community space on this property have been in the works for over four years and the township is excited to be moving ahead. The majority of the project cost is for the infrastructure with only about 1/3 of the total cost being needed for the barn itself. Bath Township has applied for, and received, several grants to help offset the expense. To date, the township has received nearly \$500,000 in grant money for the park, \$370,000 of which is earmarked and waiting to be spent on this next phase of the project. The remaining funds will come from the JEDD account which is the Joint Economic Development District with Fairlawn and Akron. When the JEDD was established over 20 years ago, the goal was for the funds to be used for the rural preservation of Bath Township.



PROPERTY TAXES: WHY THEY MATTER

Homeowners across Ohio are grappling with big increases in property tax bills. In Summit County, the 2023 reappraisal raised property values by an average of 31.4%. For many families, this has created real financial strain. Understandably, frustration with property taxes is growing. A citizen-led ballot initiative is now being discussed that could completely eliminate property taxes in Ohio as early as 2026.

At first glance, getting rid of property taxes may sound like a huge relief. But before voters decide, it's important to understand what property taxes actually do. Property taxes are the main way local communities pay for services. Every property owner contributes a portion based on the assessed value of their property. The money collected doesn't go to Columbus or Washington; it stays local.

Property taxes fund about 95% of Bath Township operations. Unlike cities or villages, townships cannot collect income tax. That means without property taxes, Bath Township would lose its ability to pay for services residents count on.

If property taxes were eliminated with no replacement plan, here's what would be at risk in Bath Township:

- **Police & Fire Protection:** Township police and fire are funded almost entirely by property taxes including staffing, equipment, facilities, and training.
- **Roads:** Maintenance of the 62 lane miles of township roads, including plowing, resurfacing, and pothole repair would all be drastically reduced or eliminated.
- **Parks & Recreation:** Local parks, playgrounds, trails, and community programs would face cutbacks or closure.
- **Zoning & Planning:** Zoning and planning guide safe and orderly development. Growth could become disorganized and unsafe.

Property taxes are the backbone of township government. Abolishing them without a new funding system would dismantle the very services that keep our community desirable, safe, and livable.

Supporters of the ballot initiative suggest there are other ways to support these services. However, no specific replacement plan has been introduced. Until one exists, the proposal simply removes funding that allows Bath Township to exist.

A smarter option would be to reform property taxes instead of eliminating them. For example, expanding the Homestead Exemption would reduce the taxable value of a home for seniors and lower-income families, helping those most impacted while keeping township services intact.

Many people don't realize that not all of their property tax payment stays in the township. Summit County Fiscal Office offers an online tool called "Where Do My Tax Dollars Go" where residents can see exactly how their property tax is divided. In Bath, only about 22% of the total bill stays with the township, yet that portion is what funds nearly all township services.

With the possibility of a 2026 ballot vote, this conversation is not theoretical. Here are two steps residents can take:

- **Engage with lawmakers:** Reach out to state legislators to advocate for fair solutions that provide tax relief without dismantling local services.
- **Stay informed:** Attend township meetings, learn how your tax dollars are used, and talk with neighbors about what's at stake.

Property taxes can be a burden, and recent increases have been difficult for many families but eliminating them, with no replacement plan, would create a fiscal crisis. Services like police, fire, road maintenance, parks, and zoning would simply not be possible without this funding.

As the potential ballot initiative approaches, Ohioans will face a choice: pursue short-term relief that risks long-term harm, or work toward thoughtful reforms that balance fairness with community stability.

GHENT INTERCHANGE OVERLAY DISTRICT

The Bath Township Zoning Commission is currently drafting zoning language for the Ghent Interchange Overlay District, a recommendation outlined in the Township's 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan, which was finalized with the aid of the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, was accepted by the Board of Trustees earlier this year.

To assist with the draft, the Township contracted with Envision Group to prepare the draft overlay language under the guidance of the Zoning Commission. The proposed overlay is divided into two distinct subareas:

- Subarea 1 is located at the southern end of the district, beginning at the intersection of Ghent Road and I-77 and extending 500 feet north. This area is designed for mixed-use or commercial development, which is similar to the existing B-1 base zoning district.
- Subarea 2 encompasses the remainder of the overlay district and is designated for residential development, specifically detached single-family homes on smaller lots than the existing R-2 base zoning district.

The goal of the overlay district is to limit commercial growth in the area and allow for a transitional residential development. An overlay district gives the township more powers than in typical zoning districts to create added development and architectural standards.

The process of amending the Zoning Resolution includes review and recommendations from Summit County Planning Commission and the Bath Township Zoning Commission. Once the Zoning Commission has completed their

review and made their final recommendations it will be sent to the Bath Township Board of Trustees. The proposed text can be found on the Township's website, www.bathtownship.org, on the Current and Pending Projects page under the Planning and Zoning site.

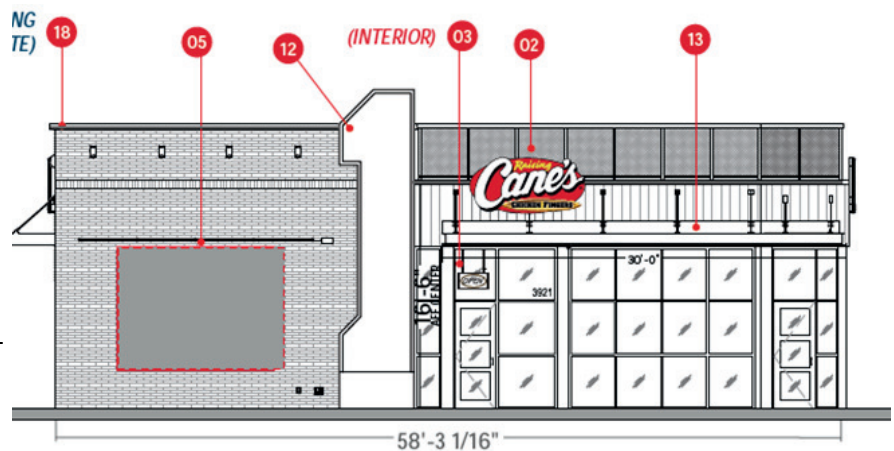
The process of amending the Zoning Resolution involves review and recommendations from both the Summit County Planning Commission and the Bath Township Zoning Commission. After the Zoning Commission completes its review and finalizes its recommendations, the proposed amendment will be forwarded to the Bath Township Board of Trustees for final approval through a public hearing. The draft text is available on the Township's website at www.bathtownship.org, located on the Current and Pending Projects page under the Planning and Zoning section.



MONTROSE DEVELOPMENTS

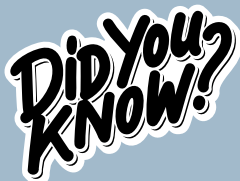
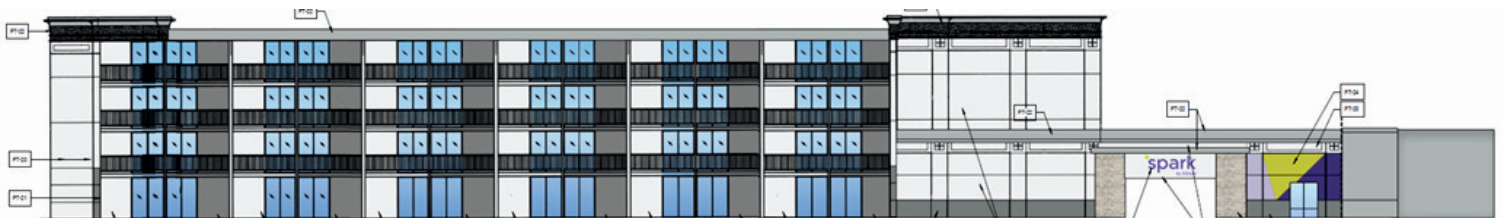
Raising Cane's:

The Township has approved plans to redevelop the former Melt Bar & Grilled site at 3921 Medina Road into a Raising Cane's fast-casual restaurant. The project will involve demolishing the existing structure and constructing a new building positioned more centrally on the site to accommodate a double-lane drive-thru. Construction is scheduled to take place through the fall and winter, with the restaurant expected to open in mid-spring 2026.



Spark by Hilton & Hyde Park Prime:

The Holiday Inn property at 4073 Medina Road has received approval from the Appearance Review Commission for a full building refresh and rebranding to Spark by Hilton. As part of this transformation, Hyde Park will return under the new name Hyde Park Prime. Both the building renovation and rebranding are slated for completion by spring 2026.



In May of 2024, after the passing of Issue 2, now codified as Chapter 3780 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Bath Township Trustees voted unanimously to approve Resolution 2024-20. Resolution 2024-20 prohibits the cultivation, processing, and retail sale of “adult use” cannabis within Bath Township. The township trustees found it to be in the best interest of Bath Township to prohibit adult use cannabis operators within the unincorporated areas of the township.

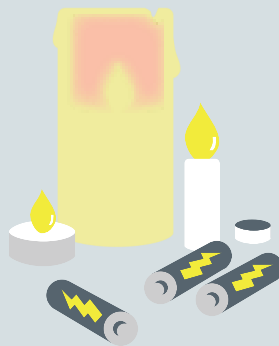
Put a FREEZE on Winter Holiday Fires



It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays, but holiday decorations can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.



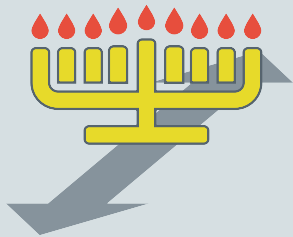
Almost half of the home decoration fires in December are started by candles.



Think about using **battery operated flameless candles**.



Christmas is the peak day for candle fires.



Keep candles at least **12 inches** away from anything that burns.



A dry Christmas tree can burn very hot and very fast.



More than 1 in every 5 Christmas tree fires were caused by a heat source too close to the tree.



Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect.



Make sure your tree is **at least 3 feet away** from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators, space heaters, candles or heat vents. Also, make sure your tree does not block exits.



Get rid of your tree after Christmas or when it is dry.



For more information on how to prevent winter fires, visit usfa.fema.gov/holiday and nfa.org/winter.

HERITAGE BARNES OF BATH TRAIL

A new wayfinding sign now sits in the Heritage Corridors of Bath Wayside Exhibit located at 950 N Cleveland Massillon Rd. The new sign spotlights the Heritage Barns of Bath Trail, a scenic 19-mile drive with 9 stops. The self-guided trail features historic 19th century rural heritage locations including numerous barns, hamlets, parks, and many century homes and structures.

The sign was made possible by a generous grant from Bath Community Fund, and support from Bath Township and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Launched by the Discover Bath Barns Committee, the trail fuses heritage tourism with hometown pride; boosting local business while honoring Bath's rural roots. Designed to complement existing exhibits, the sign helps visitors navigate the route and soak in the township's timeless and rural charm.

1 The Wayside Exhibit is the first stop on the trail. Constructed in 2015, it marks the gateway to the Heritage Corridors of Bath, an Ohio Scenic Byway, and the Heritage Barns of Bath Trail.

2 The barn was built in 1889 as a tool and storage barn for Bath Township's first town hall. Today, it serves as additional exhibit space for the Bath Township Historical Society.

3 The barn is circa 1927. In the 1960s, the barn was relocated to this site by the Lemmon family from property sold to build Interstate 77. Today, it is one of the community buildings at the North Fork Preserve of Bath.

4 Dairy farmer Ira Underwood built the barn in 1886. In 1966, the Bath Community Players purchased the barn. Now operating as the Western Reserve Playhouse, the barn has been converted into a year-round theater.

5 The barn was built in 1910 to replace a barn that burned down. The Dominican Sisters of Peace bought the farm in 1967 and established Crown Point Ecology Center, which operates today as a community supported agriculture farm, an event venue, and a place for sustainable land use, advocacy, and education.

6 There are several barns on the site, but three original barns – the red-colored livestock and farm equipment barn circa 1854; the carriage barn circa 1874; and the sheep barn circa 1898 – were used by the Hale Family. Today, Hale Farm & Village is nationally recognized as a living history museum focused on the heritage of the Western Reserve.

7 Jason Hammond, one of Bath's first settlers, arrived in 1810 and established this homestead. It was sold in 1863 to the Cranz family; they built the smaller of these two barns circa 1865 and added the larger barn with a cantilever forebay circa 1885.

8 William O'Neil, founder of The General Tire & Rubber Co., and his wife, Grace, built their 1944 gambrel bank barn for cattle and horses. Today, the barn houses a small maternity colony of big brown bats.

9 Hiram Welton built the house and barn on two small lots in Ghent circa 1850. A blacksmith shop operated out of the barn for many years. Lanson Barker bought the property circa 1920. Today, the barn is privately owned.



Bath Township is excited to announce the launch of TextMyGov, a smart texting service designed to make it easier than ever for residents to connect with the township. With TextMyGov, residents will be able to quickly access township information, get answers to

common questions, and even report issues; all right from their phone, without needing to download an app.

This 24/7 service will give residents a convenient way to stay informed and engaged, while helping Bath Township provide efficient and timely responses. More details, including how to sign up are available at bathtownship.org and on the Bath Township Facebook page.

BATH COMMUNITY FUND SAYS ‘THANKS!’ PLANS IMPACT GRANT FOR AMERICA-250

Thanks to the generosity of long-time supporters and first-time donors, the monetary goal of \$400,000 for Bath Community Fund’s “For Bath, Forever” 10th Anniversary Campaign was not only reached but surpassed! By the time of the fund’s Gala Celebration on Aug. 1, the campaign raised \$544,627 through 384 gifts from 188 donors, increasing the fund’s endowment to nearly \$1.8 million.

On behalf of the fund’s Advisory Board, its supporters, and its many grantees, THANK YOU for your generosity. The success of this campaign ensures that the legacy of philanthropy being built in Bath supports our local nonprofits and the work they do which benefits so many.

Since its founding in 2014, BCF has awarded more than \$300,000 in grants to local nonprofits. The fund’s 2025 grant cycle was Sept. 1 through Oct. 1, and grant awards will be announced in December.

Given the community’s generosity and the occasion of the 250th birthday of the USA next year, the Advisory Board of Bath Community Fund has set aside \$10,000 for a 2026 America-250 Impact Grant. These funds will assist community efforts to plan, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the founding of the United States while acknowledging the impact of Bath Township residents, past and present, on the community’s history, preservation, environment, and arts and culture. Applicants for America-250 Impact Grant funding can be local governmental entities, local nonprofit (501(c)(3) organizations, and/or community organizations using a fiscal sponsor within Bath Township. While the total Impact Grant funding will be \$10,000, as many as five grants could be awarded.

Details for Bath Community Fund’s America-250 Impact Grant will be available later this year. The planned grant cycle is scheduled for Jan. 1-31, 2026, and awards will be announced in March 2026.

To learn more about Bath Community Fund and how you can be part of this community resource, visit bathcommunityfund.org, scan the QR code, or contact Jody Konstand at jmkmedia@msn.com or 330-618-4477.



CELEBRATE THE SEASON WYE ROAD BRIDGE LIGHTING

A favorite Bath tradition, the annual Wye Road Bridge Lighting and Santa Arrival, hosted by the Bath Business Association will take place Friday, November 28th at 5:30 p.m. at the Wye Road Bridge near The Bake Shop in Ghent.

Enjoy a festive evening celebrating the season with your family, friends, and neighbors. Santa will arrive by Bath Fire Department sleigh to hear children’s holiday wishes, while you enjoy the evening as Bath Business Association members hand out cookies, coffee, and hot chocolate.

Please join us for the 21st year of this beloved community event, and don’t forget to support your friends and neighbors this season by shopping local in Bath!





PRSR STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
AKRON OH
PERMIT #286

Bath Fire Department will once again be partnering with Toys for Tots by hosting a collection sight for toy drop off. Toys can be dropped off at Bath Township Fire Station located at 3864 W. Bath Road beginning on 11/1. Toys should be new and unwrapped and appropriate for anyone toddler through teenage. WWW.TOYSFORTOTS.ORG

BATH TOWNSHIP
HALLOWEEN
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26TH
FD/PD OPEN HOUSE: 3-5PM
TRICK OR TREAT: 5-7
3864 W. BATH ROAD

The poster features a vibrant orange and purple background with a large white spiderweb. At the bottom, there are illustrations of four children in Halloween costumes (a devil, a pumpkin, a cat, and a witch), a black cat, and a black haunted house with green windows and a chimney. The text is in a bold, blue, jagged font.