



# CONNECTIONS

VERMILION, OHIO • WINTER 2019 / VOLUME 27, ISSUE 1

## Stress RELIEVERS

This year learn new ways to relieve your stress and live a better life.

Relax with gentle yoga, learn simple meditation practices and even bring the kids in for a family meditation program.

Yoga for beginners meets every Monday at 10 a.m. with instructor Chloe Roth. Learn gentle poses for stretching and relaxation. Bring a mat or towel. Registration is not required.

Meditation is led by Jordan Via Oberholtzer every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. Train yourself to be more accepting of all the ups and downs of life. No registration needed.

The soothing sounds of singing bowls help little ones relax at a family-friendly program Tuesday, Jan. 22 at 6:30 p.m.



## CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL!

## Delicious treats Saturday, Feb. 2

Sample dozens of chocolate treats and vote for your favorite at the Friends of Ritter's annual Chocolate Festival.

It will be held Saturday, Feb. 2 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. during Vermilion's town-wide Ice A-Fair. Tickets are just 50 cents a taste. Last year, 130 volunteer

bakers showed off their best dishes for more than 2,000 visitors. This popular event sells out so be sure to get here in time for the best selection and variety.

The Chocolate Festival is a fundraiser for the Friends, who work to promote reading and use of the library.

## GIVING BACK

There's a new opportunity for giving at Ritter this year. The library board of trustees has established a foundation dedicated to providing financial support for the library.

"In light of reductions in state funding, the library is looking for new sources of income," said Zack Dolyk, who serves on Ritter's board of trustees and helped establish the foundation. He said the goal is to help bridge the financial gap between dwindling state funds and the cost of maintaining Vermilion's library as one of the best in the area.

The fund will be used to complement the library's budget for collection development, capital improvements and other services that enhance Ritter's mission to "enrich, empower and entertain" the community.

Members of the foundation board of directors are Dolyk, president; David Berns, vice president; Libby Davis Williams, secretary; Clark Fitzgibbons, treasurer; Larry Bettcher, Candy Fischer, Janet Ford, Debby Zanglin and Tom Zeck.



Standing, left to right, Clark Fitzgibbons, David Berns, Zack Dolyk, Debby Zanglin. Seated, Larry Bettcher and Libby Davis Williams.

The foundation has been kicked off with generous donations from board members as well as a special gift from local residents Nancy and Ken Bliss. "This is a new way for people to consider showing their support for our library," said Marie Warden, president of the board of trustees.

# NEW LOOK. MORE FUN!

The Early Learning Room in the children's department has gotten a make-over.

A new underwater theme features a submarine with a real porthole to peek through! Fun sea creatures include a rock 'n roll octopus, a kid-sized whale cushion, anemone beanbags and more.

Families love the room because the enclosed space has specially designed toys and activities that help little ones learn the skills they need to become

good readers. Kids get a chance to interact with other children while adults can network with one another to share ideas and resources.

The new look was generously funded by a grant from Ritter's Endowment Fund. Over the past five years, donations to the fund have paid for new bookshelves; furniture in the adult reading area, the teen department and the Commons; outdoor patio furniture; microfilm and a microfilm reader.



## Building for the future

Building improvements are a top priority at Ritter this year. A new handicapped-accessible ramp and handrail at the east entrance will make it even easier to visit the library.

Repairs are also underway on leaking copper gutters on the roof of the original part of the library, which was built in 1957. Rather than expensive replacements, new Dura-Last membranes are being installed, which cost half as much and are guaranteed to last 15 years.

Trustees are also planning to repair skylight panels that were part of an expansion in 1983. The panels are well past their expected life.

To address these expenses, trustees are focused on growing the library's building fund. "We want to keep the building in the condition that the community has come to expect and be proud of," said Zack Dolyk, Ritter trustee and chair of the building and grounds committee.



Above, Fred Ostrander, facility manager, points out leaking gutters. Right, the new ramp is poured.



## Craft Swap

Clean out your craft cabinet and go home with something new! Our popular craft swap is set for Saturday, March 30.

Gather up the items you no longer use but which are in good condition and bring them in to the library between March 22 to 29. We'll accept clean supplies for hobbies such as sewing, painting, needlework or general crafting. Please group similar items in baggies or plastic containers.

Donors will receive a ticket for early admission to the swap at 10 a.m. March 30. The swap will open to the public at 11 a.m.

All items will be free. Be sure to bring a tote to take home all your new treasures.

The day will also include a fun craft project, coffee & cookies. Please be sure to register so we can plan. All leftovers will be donated to charity.

## Help with your taxes

Need help filling out your tax forms? The library is now taking appointments with the specialists in the AARP's Tax Aide program.

Trained volunteers help prepare tax returns for low- and middle-income taxpayers with special attention to those ages 60 and older. The program is now in its 50th year.

Appointments begin Feb. 1 and are available Tuesdays and Fridays at the library. Call 440-967-3798 today to schedule yours.

# Our local history



Station master Bill Gergel and his wife Elsie.



## THE STORIES OF Vermilion

A donation to the library last month revealed another of the unique stories that make Vermilion a great place to drop anchor.

Former resident Richard Gergel donated some G-gauge model trains owned by his father, William, who worked for the New York Central Railroad and served as the stationmaster in Vermilion in the 1940s and early '50s.

Richard Gergel said he spent a lot of time with his father at the train station, which was located alongside the northern tracks in Vermilion in a building now owned by St. Mary Church.

"My father would do everything when he was on duty," he said. "He'd sell you a ticket, log the freight, stop the train and tell it when to go. It was a one-person operation." Gergel said his father used four-wheeled handcarts to haul luggage and freight.

Inside the station, Gergel said, "To me, it was like an airport control tower. High up on the wall he had maps that showed where the trains were and there were little tiny lights that would light up to show the various locations and signals. They were red and green and white and constantly changing. It looked like a Christmas tree."

Gergel recalled a frequent activity at the

tracks that he called "throwing fish". He said a train doing a "fish run" would stop at all the little towns along the lakeshore. Trucks would pull up full of wooden boxes packed with fish on ice. High school boys would earn extra money by loading the fish onto refrigerator cars.

He said two boys would stand in the truck bed on either side of the heavy wooden boxes, each grab a handle and begin to swing, then launch the fish onto the train. Sometimes, Gergel recalled, the fish would crash to the ground. "Then everyone went home with a fish dinner," he said.

Find more local history on the Stories of Vermilion page at [www.ritterpubliclibrary.org](http://www.ritterpubliclibrary.org). And check the online calendar for our series of live interviews with longtime residents, sponsored in partnership with the Vermilion Area Archival Society and the Vermilion History Museum.



See the model trains on the second floor above the magazine shelves.



### GIFTS TO RITTER

Lois Arnold

Donald & Rita Blanford

Ken & Nancy Bliss

Adele Kovanic

IN MEMORY OF  
BILL & LORIE FEDOR:  
William Fedor

IN MEMORY OF  
FLORENCE BROWN:  
Henry & Ann Frizzi

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Marie Warden, president

Eileen Bulan, vice president

Lois Arnold, secretary

Chad Coolidge

Zack Dolyk

Pam Reese

Rick Van Den Bossche

### ENDOWMENT BOARD

Pat Farley, president

David Berns, vice president

Sheila Myracle, secretary

Judy Ryan, treasurer

Rita Hart

Laura Roth

Thomas Zeck

Judy Nagy, emeritus

### Hours

Mon - Thurs 9:30 am - 8:30 pm

Fri - Sat 9:30 am - 5:30 pm

Sunday 1 - 5 pm

5680 Liberty Ave.  
Vermilion, OH 44089  
440-967-3798



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## POSTAL CUSTOMER

# This season Find your connection

Don't sit at home this winter! Your library is your connection to the community. You'll find book clubs and game clubs, technology club, craft clubs, card games and more.

Get out of the house and be part of our community. Not sure where you fit in? Call us and we'll help you find your niche. It may be a quiet pursuit such as puzzling or sorting local history. Or maybe you'd like to work with a group on a community-service project. Whatever it is, we've got a spot for you.



### Game/Hobby Clubs

**Knitting** every Thursday at 11 a.m.

**Crafting** every first Wednesday at 1 p.m.

**Board Games** every second Wednesday at 6 p.m.

**Talking Technology** every third Thursday at 10 a.m.

**Genealogy** every third Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.

**Crafting** every fourth Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Call for details about regular card groups.

### Book Clubs

**Classics Plus** evening club every first Monday at 7 p.m.

**Shorelines** afternoon club every third Thursday at 1 p.m.

### Community Service

**Friends of Ritter** every first Monday at 2 p.m.

**Sewing for Babies** every second Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.

**Local History** volunteers every Tuesday morning. Call 440-967-3798 for details.