



# THE VAN WERT COUNTY FOUNDATION



Fall 2014 | NEWSLETTER



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Paul G. Hoverman

## DIRECTOR OF WASSENBERG ART CENTER

Hope Wallace

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## WASSENBERG ART CENTER WORK CONTINUES!



As an entrance gateway into Downtown Van Wert, we spent considerable time making sure that The Wassenberg Art Center is welcoming to both pedestrians and to those traveling through our community. The overall design allows for flexibility in programming for the Art Center.

The new design ensures that the former Armory building will stay in a park-like setting. Meandering sidewalks draw the public into the space - an indicator that this is their Art Center. Benches are strategically placed around the site for relaxation. These benches are large sandstone boulders that were originally used as bridge abutments here in Van Wert County. The pathway on the North side of the facility will conveniently connect the Wassenberg to Downtown Van Wert, allowing for greater interaction with our downtown environment. The Van Wert Rotary Club contributed funds for that path. Rotary Path will connect Washington Street to the footbridge crossing Town Creek. There is also a fire pit and outdoor seating area. The park allows for several areas where future sculpture can be placed.

Construction has been moving at a fast pace. Concrete work for the new parking lot and sidewalks should be completed soon. Electrical work is well underway. Plant material will be installed in early spring 2015. We can't wait to unveil the final product. Thanks for your patience as we work to make sure this is a gem that we will all be proud of!

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



**I love fall weather!** It's just a great time to be alive. It's not too hot and it's not too cold. I'm putting in some pretty long days but that's okay because it's amazing outside. I'm lucky to be working with my Dad and Luke to get our crops in the bin, which is kind of a reward in itself!

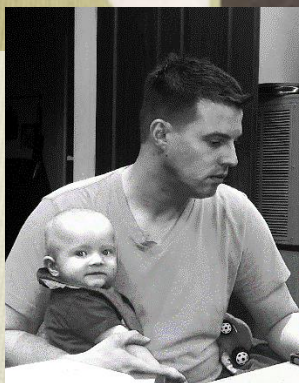
The smell of corn drying, of freshly turned earth, of burning leaves (sorry, we still burn them out in the country), of a diesel engine on a cool November morning. I'm sure it probably defies explanation, but there's really nothing like it. And there's also football! I never played the game, but I loved (and still love) watching my boys play the game. That's serendipity – two of the things I enjoy most happening at the same time. Arguably though, one makes it a little harder to enjoy the other. Here's the rub though: that on autumn's heels comes the most brutal, uncomfortable season of the year. Winter. There, I've said it. I didn't really even want to write it down! It's just a miserable time of the year...for me and probably most Van Wertians! Snow and cold temperatures: I'm talking bone-chilling, finger-numbing, breath-robbing cold! Shoveling snow, scraping car windows, insane propane bills, that bitter cold wind, road salt that makes your car turn white and hunting for that MATCHING GLOVE!! There isn't one good or redeeming thing I can think of about winter. I must be a little slow, but every year that first snow catches me by surprise. I guess I should stop complaining, because this is Ohio and this is the kind of weather we routinely deal with. It's our reality. As you get a little older, you start to question the sensibility of living in this kind of climate. You lose your tolerance for the cold. There's an impending sense of dread over the discomfort that you know is coming. You say to yourself, "Which one of my dim-witted ancestors came over from the Old Country and decided to settle here? Were all the good places already taken?"

When I was a younger man, I scoffed at the cold, and the mentality of older folks who adopted the snowbird life style. Seemed like they were just kind of 'skipping out' on us! It's probably not a very nice thing to say, but I figured they were a little weak in the knees to not be able to handle this cold. I mean for goodness sake's just put on a coat and an extra pair of socks. It's not rocket science, just bundle up (I kind of think that's what my mom used to say)! But it isn't that simple. As you get older your body's internal thermostat starts demanding some changes! You find yourself wearing slippers around the house instead of just conventional bare feet (admittedly a little wimpy). As I'm getting a little older (and perhaps wiser), the mathematical equation of: warm sun + sandy beach + cold drink + Caribbean island (or just some place warm) is starting to really resonate! There's a real wisdom here that has been escaping me for decades. I've been missing it!

If these thoughts, and other similar musings are going through your head, maybe you're in the autumn of your life too. If that's the case, maybe we should start by discussing the weather and transition to how the Van Wert County Foundation could provide solutions for the seasons of your life. Here's hoping for a warmer winter!



# COMMENTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY



**My wife Anna and I welcomed our first son in May.** Grayson and I spent a lot of time on the porch swing this summer – his hand resting in mine as he slept. I had a lot of time to ponder what his life would look like. What will be available for him when he is ready to put down roots?

Our community has spent a lot of resources to ensure that our best and brightest have access to a quality education. There are also folks who have a passion to make this a place where those same students will want to return. Is Van Wert a ‘vibrantly awake’ community that will draw back our talent?

Many who came before us were purposeful about their lives. They lived and planned with strategy. Their purpose was to make Van Wert what they truly wanted it to be. Some did this with their time, some with their talents, and some with their finances. Many folks have left their estates to The Van Wert County Foundation with the intention that their estate would keep working to fulfill their vision. Their trust in us reminds me of the time on the porch when Grayson put his hand on mine. It was a moment of unfathomable trust.

That moment provides a timely discussion about The Van Wert County Foundation. We have taken an active role to affirm that we meet the moral, mental, intellectual, and physical responsibility that has been entrusted to us. It is my hope that we take every step with intentional purpose. We owe this to those who have entrusted us with their life resources, be it large or small. This ideal has driven our actions over the course of this year. We have had to ask ourselves if we are truly being the best stewards that we can be. We have had to make hard decisions that have taken intense time and energy. We scrutinize and audit our investments and assets on a regular basis to ensure that they are working to the best of their ability.

We continue to make improvements to our farm ground – working to see that our acreage is in the best possible condition to maximize yields. This allows us to better meet the needs of our community. Actions have been taken regarding our facilities at the Wassenberg Art Center. This slow metamorphosis has been intentional. We want to make sure that we are doing it right for future generations. The Van Wert Area Performing Arts Foundation has also recognized the need to preserve the awe inspiring space of The Niswonger Performing Arts Center for future generations. They have established an endowment fund with that thought in mind. We hope that these changes and efforts show our commitment to make this the ‘vibrantly awake’ Van Wert that will undoubtedly retain and encourage our local talent.

If you are passionate about the future of our community and want to find out how your efforts can continue, I’d love to talk with you. Let’s do this together – hand-in-hand!

The Van Wert County Foundation is only able to benefit the community because of the foresight and generosity of others. Consider choosing The Van Wert County Foundation to continue your passions and legacy!

## **YOUR GIFT WILL BE HELD IN PERPETUITY**

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The income generated from your gift will continue to benefit the community now and in future years.

## **GRANTS WILL BE MADE IN YOUR NAME**

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You may name the fund with your name, or that of your family, friend, or organization. Your fund is open ended and may be increased with additional gifts at any time. Grants from your fund will be recorded in the name of your fund as a lasting symbol of your caring.

## **YOUR GIFT MAY BE DESIGNATED FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE**

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As a donor, you may specify how the income is to be used. Should the intended purposes of your gift become obsolete in the future, The Foundation's Trustees will amend the provisions of your fund to continue to meet the changing community needs. You may also donate undesignated funds for use at the Trustee's discretion.

## **TAX BENEFITS**

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Gifts made to The Foundation (a public charity) will qualify for maximum deductions for income, gift and estate purposes.

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY**

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Annual reporting and filing of tax returns, public disclosure of all grant activities and a broad based Board of Trustees representing diverse areas of expertise assures continued use of public funds in the public interest.

## **CONTRIBUTIONS ARE PROFESSIONALLY AND PRUDENTLY MANAGED**

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The Foundation's Investment Committee provides the oversight of our investment portfolio. Investment managers are monitored and reviewed on a quarterly basis. Because funds are pooled for investment purposes, donors have the advantage of a diverse investment mix. The Foundation's Trustees are elected for their integrity, competence, knowledge of the community and concern for its philanthropic needs.

## **TO ESTABLISH A DONOR FUND**

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Contact The Foundation office for further assistance in establishing your fund.

419.238.1743

[info@vanwertcountyfoundation.org](mailto:info@vanwertcountyfoundation.org)

# VISUAL ARTS IN VAN WERT



**It's been a whole year!** The pace has not slowed, in fact, it has charged on since that first happy day when we opened our doors in 2013. Traffic is still increasing, our phone is rarely quiet, nor are our surroundings! The roar and thump of heavy equipment continues to mold our surrounding spaces into a showplace we all can be deliriously proud of. We have already hosted numerous wedding receptions, alumni events, class reunions and parties in addition to our many, exhibits and visual art programming. Thank you for everyone's support!

We are offering the ArtReach program again this year – two afternoons per week. Students are provided vital art instruction and receive a snack. We certainly can't have hungry artists! Vine & Palette classes continue every month and often sell out well in advance. Sessions are scheduled through April 2015. Several private and corporate Vine & Palettes have proved to be great team building activities. Monthly photography workshops will be set up at the beginning of the year along with many more art programs.

Our "Faces of Little Bighorn" website is growing by leaps and bounds. There are several new tabs featuring pertinent videos, writings, encyclopedia, a section on how to get involved, and an area regarding the progress of our own collection. Our in-house exhibit will be expanding with a bit of interactive items as well. Stay tuned!

The next big exhibit will be the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Wassenberg Artists' Exhibit & Sale. The opening is scheduled for November 15 at 6 p.m.

At the beginning of the year, we will be hosting the traveling American Watercolor Exhibit! This is a national touring show of some of the best watercolors in the country. We are honored to host it. To ring in the show, we will feature international blues musician Radoslav Lorkovic. Radoslav tours the world with his unique piano style and has played at notable locations such as the Kennedy Center and Carnegie Hall.

If you have any questions regarding exhibits, classes or programs or would like to get involved please contact us at the Wassenberg Art Center:

419.238.6837  
[info@wassenbergartcenter.org](mailto:info@wassenbergartcenter.org)  
[wassenbergartcenter.org](http://wassenbergartcenter.org)  
[davidhumphreysmiller.org](http://davidhumphreysmiller.org)

**Hope Wallace**  
*Executive Director*  
*Wassenberg Art Center*

## Wassenberg ART CENTER



# PERFORMING ARTS IN VAN WERT



**The Niswonger Performing Arts Center of Northwest Ohio will be celebrating its eighth anniversary this spring.** We opened our doors in March 2007 with a weekend of concerts featuring Van Wert, Lincolnview and Crestview students, distinguished alumni performers, Country Star Lee Greenwood, and Contemporary Christian artists Sandy Patti and Larnelle Harris.

We have grown immensely since that opening. Our budget has more than quadrupled in size. Our outreach has grown to nearly 20,000 patrons from states and provinces all over America and Canada. Many of you have had an enormous impact on our growth. We can't say thank you enough!

The Van Wert Area Performing Arts Foundation, a supporting foundation of The Van Wert County Foundation, has worked to improve the quality of concerts, events, and services offered. Although the Van Wert City Schools own the building, we have joyfully enhanced the value of the physical facilities through the many gifts and donations we have received.

It is time to look long-term at the welfare of the operations at the Niswonger PAC and the physical well-being of the structure. We know that the time will come when major repairs will be required to maintain the quality of the facility that so many appreciate and are proud of. A permanent endowment fund has been established with The Van Wert County Foundation for these purposes. A major gift was given to the Van Wert Area Performing Arts Foundation to start this endowment fund.

We want to ensure that we are here to serve generations for years to come. If you share this vision and would like to be involved, I would be happy to discuss how you can add to this very important fund. My office is located at The Van Wert County Foundation. You may also speak with Endowment Committee members Chuck Koch and Gary Taylor, who represent The Van Wert County Foundation on the Board of Directors of The Van Wert Area Performing Arts Foundation.

I hope to see you enjoying the performing arts at the Niswonger Performing Arts Center!

**Paul Hoverman**

*Coordinator of Performing Arts  
Executive Director of the  
Niswonger Performing Arts Center*  
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**THE VAN WERT COUNTY FOUNDATION**  
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