



EAST PALESTINE PROGRESS

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Adalynn Grope met the Grinch (Council Member Lenny Glavan) at the tree lighting!

Thank You For Helping Us 'Brighten Our Future' New Holiday Tradition – Community Tree Lighting Ceremony

The 'Brighten Our Future' Tree Lighting and Fundraiser conducted by The Village of East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (EPCIC) was a resounding success. During this first event, which we hope to become an annual tradition, corporate sponsorship donations raised \$161,500, which will support the village's economic recovery and revitalization efforts.

Plans are already in the works for the EPCIC to use some of these funds to purchase property downtown that could be used for a public space for all to enjoy. Ornaments are still available for purchase until the end of the year at epohio.org/brighten-our-future/.

The tree lighting ceremony was the grand finale to an exciting day of fun, family events and activities during the annual Snowflake Festival. A special thanks to the Chamber of Commerce and all the village businesses who joined together to make it a successful and enjoyable day for area residents and neighbors to kick off the holiday season.



2024 ANNUAL
SNOWFLAKE
Festival
EAST PALESTINE • OHIO



1. Thanks to our video stars, back row (L to R): Brady Brubaker, Alexander Mead. Front row (L to R): Lillian Ratner, Charlotte Greene, Jillian McCauley and Isabelle Ratner.
2. Lady Bulldogs Girls Basketball Program float.
3. East Palestine High School Marching Band.
4. Keepsake ornament.
5. Council Member Barb Herriott, Mayor Trent Conaway, and the Grinch
6. Santa Steve Baird with Heather Miliken, winner of the 'Brighten Our Future' \$500 Raffle gift card.
7. East Palestine Fire Department in the parade.

The East Palestine Community Foundation

Building a Better Tomorrow for Our Community



The East Palestine Community Foundation (EPCF) is a Platinum Sponsor, donating \$30,000 to the 'Brighten Our Future' Fundraiser organized by the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (EPCIC).

Founded in 2013, the EPCF's primary mission is to provide funding to other nonprofits for improvements and projects that will benefit the community. Having raised and donated more than \$142,000 since their inception, the EPCF has quickly established itself as a pillar of East Palestine's future. Their efforts can be seen at every level of the community; from the Splash Pad at the East Palestine Park Pool, to upgraded security equipment for the village's police officers.

They rely on the incredible support of donors and volunteers whose generosity has helped the group fund impactful projects like necessary Cemetery Repairs, Dog Days, and the unforgettable East Palestine Band trip among many others. Their signature fundraising events include the annual EPCF Golf Outing and Trivia Night, where every dollar raised goes right back into initiatives that benefit East Palestine.

Follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/epcfinc/> to stay up-to-date with their efforts and learn how you can

help. Currently the group has 15 members who meet on the second Tuesday of the month. Nonprofits interested in applying for grant funds may pick up an application at the East Palestine Memorial Public Library.

Together, we can continue to make East Palestine a place we're proud to call home. The community benefits when we all come together.



Emcee Tom Brittain and EPCF members Antonio Diaz-Guy, Melissa Smith, Patty Sugar, Carolyn Hecking and Barbara Kliner with their donation check.

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New Public Safety Complex Receives Significant Investment in Federal Funding



The Village of East Palestine has been awarded up to \$15.8 million in federal funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to construct a new public safety complex, supported by Senator **Sherrod Brown**. This funding, provided through the USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Disaster Assistance program, will enhance the village's emergency services and overall public safety.

The new facility will house the fire and police departments, a 911 call center, and other critical emergency services, offering modern infrastructure designed to serve the community. It will

also act as a backup to the county's 911 call center, ensuring resilience in emergency response.

"We are incredibly grateful to the USDA and Senator Sherrod Brown for securing this funding," said East Palestine Fire Chief **Keith Drabick**. "This investment ensures we have the infrastructure necessary to protect and serve our residents, while also preparing us for future emergencies."

East Palestine Police Chief **James Brown** added, "The need for this facility was never more apparent than post train derailment. Incorporating all public services into one facility will allow for efficiency in government operations, provide operational continuity for our safety services, and provide a central location for community engagement."

The need for improved public safety infrastructure became clear in the aftermath of last year's train derailment, which impacted the village's ability to respond to emergencies. Both the police and fire stations were dangerously close to the derailment site, and the East Palestine communications division had to be relocated to the New Waterford Police Department.

In addition to the federal funding, the project is also supported by \$1 million in state funding via the One Time Strategic Community Investment Fund. While project details are still being finalized, the village is committed to keeping residents informed throughout the process.



**TOGETHER,
LET'S BRIGHTEN
OUR FUTURE
THIS HOLIDAY
SEASON**

NorfolkSouthern.com



Small Nation Partnership to Boost Downtown Revitalization Efforts

The Village of East Palestine is excited to announce a collaboration with Small Nation, facilitated by JobsOhio, on a strategic plan for downtown revitalization. Small Nation is dedicated to revitalizing small towns through its Small Town Success™ Formula, which empowers local leaders and property owners to build thriving downtowns with sustainable growth. They recently transformed Bellefontaine, Ohio, into a vibrant community with new businesses, renovated historic buildings, and over \$30 million in private investments.

On November 22, Small Nation's team visited East Palestine with members of the Village Council and East Palestine's Community Improvement Corporation (EPCIC) board. The agenda included a downtown walk-through and a presentation of proven techniques for downtown property and business development.

"Small Nation is excited to begin working with East Palestine," said **Jason Duff**, Founder and CEO of Small Nation. "Every good comeback story starts with supporting people and businesses with good ideas. The Village is full of those folks, and I've already connected with several."

Duff continues, "Our unique process when working with towns starts with listening. We learn the town's history, its unique characteristics, existing businesses and beloved places. This includes a survey of business types and experiences, those that are locally celebrated, and what may be missing. The latter can then be identified as opportunities to act on."

This partnership gives East Palestine a unique opportunity to revitalize its downtown, foster economic renewal, and create a vibrant community hub. The initiative is already underway,

and its success depends on the active involvement of East Palestine's business community, property owners, and aspiring entrepreneurs, all of whom have the power to shape the village's future.



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We are proud to sponsor the Village of East Palestine 'Brighten Our Future' Fundraising campaign and the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation

East Palestine Resiliency Center

Offering Substance Abuse Treatment

The East Palestine Resiliency Center offers help for those seeking treatment for chemical dependency and substance abuse concerns. Licensed Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor, **Ray Gnipp** is available for appointments.

How to Schedule Counseling

1 Call (330) 718-8260

A receptionist will answer your call. Ask to make an appointment to see Ray. The receptionist will ask you questions to assure you meet eligibility requirements and then transfer you to scheduling.

2 The First Appointment

The day before the appointment, you will receive an automated reminder call. The first appointment is called an intake assessment. In this hour you will be provided consent forms to sign and other important information will be discussed and shared.



Street and Utility Department

Keep the Streets Clear so We Can Clear the Streets

The East Palestine Street Department kindly reminds residents to refrain from parking on the streets during snowy conditions. This cooperation ensures efficient snow clearance by our plows. For questions, feel free to contact us at 330-426-4367, ext. 20.



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Professional Guidance for Your Settlement and Beyond

Attention East Palestine Residents

The upcoming settlement payments offer an opportunity to achieve meaningful financial goals. With the right plan, these funds can support immediate needs and long-term aspirations.

At WRS Wealth Advisors, we understand every financial situation is unique. That's why we start by listening—focusing on your priorities to create a strategy tailored to you.

How We Can Help:

- **Maximize Your Settlement:** Protect and grow your funds with customized strategies.
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- **Prepare for Life's Milestones:** Budget effectively for major expenses and create a retirement projection to determine when you may be able to retire and how much you'll need to make that possible.

Let's create a plan designed just for you.

Contact Financial Advisor Parker Sherry today at the number below or visit www.wrswealth.com to schedule an appointment.

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East Palestine Preschool Receives Gold Award

In 2017, the East Palestine School District took a leap and officially launched The East Palestine Preschool, designed to meet the needs of all types of learners with an intense focus on developing our littlest bulldogs. We offer a caring, creative and developmentally appropriate environment with a goal to prepare all students emotionally, socially, and academically for their future educational experiences.

We proudly announce that the East Palestine Preschool recently received a Gold Award designation from Step Up to Quality (SUTQ), a program designed to improve the quality of early learning experiences for Ohio's children. By adhering to rigorous standards based on national research, SUTQ-rated programs help children develop the skills they need for future success.



This much-deserved award was obtained through the hard work and dedication of each member of the Preschool Team. Congratulations and a special thank you to the following pictured from left to right:

- **Carol Vollnogle** (Preschool Administrator)
- **Erica St. Esprit** (Teacher)
- **Jamie Rosen** (Paraprofessional)
- **Lori Schwartz** (Paraprofessional)
- **Jennifer Kubler** (Paraprofessional)
- **Allison Sorrell** (Paraprofessional)
- **Logan Cope** (Teacher)
- **Mandy Cuddy** (Teacher)
- **Nicole Goontz** (Teacher)
- **Brittany Chick** (Paraprofessional)
- **Kasey Kridler** (Secretary)
- **Amanda James** (Paraprofessional)

New Educational Program Offered at EPHS

East Palestine High School now offers DSP-U for students looking for a career path in the developmental disabilities profession. To cultivate the next generation of Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) has collaborated with the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Alliance of Direct Support Professionals (OADSP) to provide specialized training programs for high school students. Our school district has teamed up with Threshold Residential Services (TRS) to give participants the ability to obtain practical work experience.

Upon completion of the program, students will earn nationally recognized credentials demonstrating their commitment to professional development and quality care with a Certificate of Initial Proficiency (CIP) and a DSP-1 National Credential.



Students will complete over 60 hours of learning modules, as well as 100 hours at a paid internship offered by Threshold at various locations, always under the direct supervision of one of their valued staff members. Threshold CEO **Chris Page** said, "This initiative empowers students to gain essential skills in a rewarding field while positively impacting the lives of those we serve."



DSP-U students from left to right: Kacie Williams, Maddison Foster, Brooklyn Price and McKennah Mackall



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EAST PALESTINE PROGRESS

Brighten Our Future Fundraiser Sponsors

We'd like to thank our sponsors once again for their generosity and spirit of giving during the holiday season. **Thank you!**

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Additional Thanks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WFMJ and WBCB for In-Kind Advertising• Gary and Patty Linhart from Town-n-Country Garden Center for donating the tree.• The East Palestine Fire Department for donating the tree topper.• The East Palestine Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club and Village Street Department for donating the tree decorations, hanging the lights and decorating the tree.					



