



Your source of village news, information, and events brought to you by the Village of East Palestine

East Palestine's Annual Snowflake Festival

The East Palestine Chamber of Commerce, together with community partners, hosted the annual Snowflake Festival on Saturday, December 6th, an energetic and joyful celebration of the winter season. Local businesses, organizations and community groups organized a full day of activities, beginning with **Breakfast with Santa** at the park, concluding with the East Palestine Schools evening production. We extend our thanks and appreciation to everyone who contributed to this year's event, and to the Chamber of Commerce for helping make the Snowflake Festival a cherished tradition in our town.

The East Palestine Rotary Club hosted Breakfast with Santa, a delicious way to start the morning off right with pancakes, sausage, milk, juice, and coffee, along with a big, warm hug from Santa Claus himself. The Friends of the Library held a Gingerbread House Decorating contest at the **East Palestine Memorial Public Library** and had voting available for your favorite creation! The winners from the contest were- Ainsley E. for the Pink Gingerbread house, The Diaz Family for The Nightmare Before Christmas Gingerbread house, Skylar M. for the display of Candy Land, and Tricia and Destiny M. for the Welcome to Whoville.

Bea's Insurance transformed into a winter wonderland with Gingerbread Lane, a display of Christmas trees decorated by local businesses and group organizations such as Jocelyn Stewart's travel agency- Destination Somewhere, T&M Hardware, Bea's Insurance Agency, WesBanco, the East Palestine Historical Society, the Chamber of Commerce, the East Palestine Memorial Public Library, EPGO Group and Stick to it Fitness, the Town and Country Garden Club, the Rotary Club of East Palestine, and Kerri and Jocelyn Stewart. The Town and Country Garden club sold homemade baked goods available in the front lobby of the agency.



Local businesses, such as **Kat's Krystals** and **Sutherin's Greenhouse**, welcomed customers, neighbors, and friends into their businesses to join in on festivities throughout the day. As evening settled in, families and students from the **East Palestine Middle School** gathered around the Village Tree to enjoy treats, caroling, decorating, and share the excitement of the annual tree-lighting. Following the lighting, the Christmas spirit carried on with a joyful parade held downtown on Market Street. Organizations, clubs, businesses, East Palestine City Schools students, and **Veterans** marched proudly up Market Street on custom floats spreading cheer for all to hear while passing out candy to the community.

The evening concluded with a performance of *Hometown Holiday* by the **East Palestine Drama Club**. Students from grades 5-12 took stage, with spotlight performances from Brady Brubaker, Logan Rose, Deacon Norton, Emerson Melvin, Izabella Jones, Abi Mollenkopf, Kennedy Andre, Olivia Snedeker, Isabelle Ratner, and a special feature of Simon Ratner as the Little Drummer Boy.





Demolition of the Former PNC Bank

The East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation is advancing to the next phase of their long-term revitalization strategy with the planned demolition of the former PNC Bank building on North Market Street. **Brock Builders** of North Lima will be leading the project. After a thorough evaluation of renovation options, the EP CIC determined that constructing a brand-new retail building, paired with a reimagined community outdoor space, will deliver greater value, flexibility, and long-term impact for the village, while also being more cost efficient.

A safety fence will secure the work zone throughout demolition, and while Kossuth Alley may experience brief interruptions, it will remain accessible. **Deconstruction began on Tuesday, January 13.** EP CIC President Chris Page shared the organization's enthusiasm, noting that this project represents a major step toward welcoming a future anchor tenant and strengthening the momentum of East Palestine's downtown vibrancy.

Industrial Properties Positioned for New Growth

Former JASAR industrial properties transferred to the East Palestine Community after 2023 derailment

East Palestine has long been recognized for its strong industrial roots in ceramics, brickmaking, glass production, and freight commerce. The industrial properties, prime sites within the village, were transferred to the EP CIC after the 2023 train derailment to ensure they continue serving commercial and industrial purposes.

Working with **PLATZ Realty**, select properties will be listed for sale to attract quality employers who can bring new jobs, expand local industry, and support long-term economic growth. By the end of 2026, our community aims to place one or more employers in these buildings and reinvest proceeds into additional CIC projects that benefit the village. For-sale signage, community activities, and employer-focused events will help showcase these sites and connect potential buyers with opportunities in East Palestine.

Ohio State University conducts voluntary survey

Have you:

- Participated in research?
- Wondered about your health?



We want to interview people who have participated in research or had medical questions since the Feb 3, 2023 train derailment. Participants will receive a \$50 Visa gift card for their time.

- **Purpose:** to learn about how people communicate medical information after environmental disasters.
- **Time commitment:** up to 1 hour interview over Zoom.
- **Who is conducting the study?** Language researchers at The Ohio State University.
- **What else should I know?** Participation is voluntary. The study will not provide any health care, and you will not be asked to disclose any medical information.

Want to be learn more?
Scan to take a short survey,
or email ephealthstudy@gmail.com



Study contacts: Kelsey Stratman (stratman.14@buckeyemail.osu.edu) and Dr. Christa Teston (teston.2@osu.edu).



Did you know that East Palestine's ER Advanced Ceramics was involved in the production of special refractories for the "Manhattan Project"? This became the decisive weapon that ended WWII.



East Palestine Tax Abatement Program 2026

The Village of East Palestine is excited to announce the extension of its Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Tax Abatement Program through 2026. This initiative encourages investment in both residential and commercial properties by offering valuable tax incentives for renovations, additions, and new construction.

- **For homeowners:** Eligible residential improvements receive a **100% tax exemption** on the increased assessed value—an excellent opportunity to build or upgrade an affordable home in a welcoming community.
- **For businesses and developers:** Commercial and industrial projects may qualify for customized abatements **based on project size**, helping new and expanding enterprises grow here.

East Palestine's strategic location—**just 33 miles from Pittsburgh International Airport and about an hour from downtown Pittsburgh**—offers convenient access to the region while providing the benefit of Ohio's lower tax burden and our generous local incentives. With affordable property options, a traditional school campus, and a close-knit small-town atmosphere, East Palestine delivers quality of life with big-city access.

Learn more and review eligibility at epohio.org/business-toolkit. To discuss your project, schedule a meeting with our Municipal Manager at a.diazguy@eastpalestine-oh.gov.

J.T. Miller Heads to The Olympics

East Palestine-Rooted J.T. Miller joins Team USA's men's Hockey Roster

We are honored to highlight East Palestine native and New York Rangers captain J.T. Miller for being selected for his first Winter Olympics, joining Team USA's men's hockey roster for Milan 2026. Miller, who previously competed in the 2025 Four Nations Face-Off and has a long history of international success, is expected to return from injury in mid-January.

The U.S. roster is largely made up of players from last year's 4 Nations tournament, with Tage Thompson, Clayton Keller, and Seth Jones added after standout seasons. General manager Bill Guerin emphasized team chemistry and role-specific needs in the selection process. Team USA opens Olympic play on Feb. 12 against Latvia in Group C.



Grand Opening of Kat's Krystals and The Vendor Vault

Kat's Krystals Reopens with New Vendor Vault for Small Businesses

Saturday, January 3rd, our community celebrated the **grand opening of Kat's Krystals and The Vendor Vault**. Presented by the Chamber of Commerce, Members of the East Palestine Council, and the Village Manager, Antonio Diaz-Guy, ribbon cutting was fulfilled by Travis and Kat Smith, with their granddaughter, Ripley.

Kat upgraded her storefront to 147 North Market Street, after experiencing significant growth at previous location, 94 North Maret Street, where the business blossomed for two and a half years. This new space enables the Smith's additional room for new items to be brought in, which will be incorporated after Kat attends a large gem showcase in Tucson, Arizona, this month.

An abundance of **approximately thirty-five vendors** showcased their products, ranging from homemade dog collars, wood burned designed tables, custom chess sets, and much more. Vendors and community members inquired about upcoming classes wanting to be taught, such as cupcake decorating and earring making, which will be announced on social media along with being posted on a bulletin board inside the shop. Having these showcased local vendors allows growth for them as well as small business owners, potentially one day growing into their own space in downtown East Palestine as well- precisely how Kat's Krystals also started.



Rental Available in the Heart of East Palestine!

Perfectly located in the center of the village's main shopping district, this 1,215 sq ft commercial space offers excellent visibility and convenient access to nearby businesses. 94 North Market Street features a large front picture window, updated flooring, a white-brick exterior, and a clean, move-in-ready interior. The space is wheelchair accessible and includes a restroom, kitchenette, and storage room, with ample parking available at both the front and rear of the building. Rent is approximately \$800 per month, with water and sewer included. The first six months are offered at a discounted rate, and qualified tenants may be eligible for improvement incentives through the East Palestine CIC.

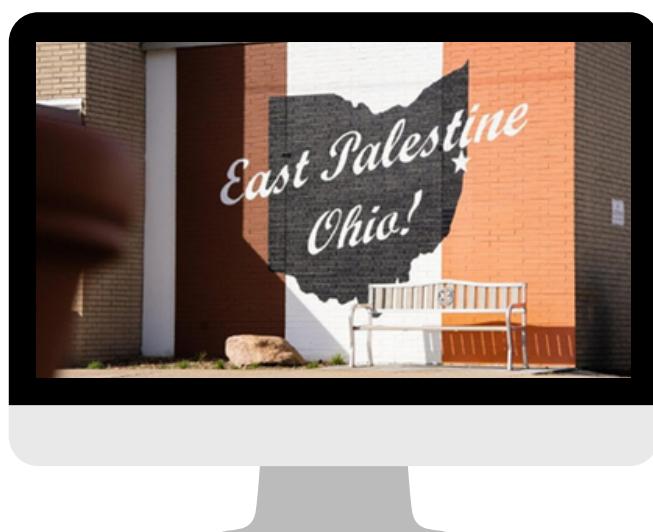
Kat Smith, owner of Kat's Krystals, shared: "I love how it's in the middle of downtown. When any event happens, we are right in the thick of it. People stop by just to say hi. I love that it is newly renovated, so everything feels fresh and updated, and the kitchenette is so convenient for lunch breaks."



To schedule a tour, please contact Barb Herriott at 330-770-1163 or b.herriott@eastpalestine-oh.gov



85 North Market Street
East Palestine, OH 44413



Stay Up to Date on Village News:

Big things continue to happen in East Palestine as we work towards a brighter future in our community. Now you can follow every step and help us spread the word of bringing back vibrancy to our village and creating a community that will thrive in the modern world.

Follow EPCIC projects shaping the Village at epohio.org, under Economic Development, the EPCIC Projects page highlights ongoing community initiatives curating the village's future.

Follow the Village of East Palestine social media by searching [@villageofepohio or scan the QR codes!](https://www.instagram.com/villageofepohio)

