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Mayor

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MAYOR KURTZ'S WEEKLY UPDATE FOR MAY 20, 2022

National Police Appreciation Week



Police Chief Robert Butler

On behalf of the entire community, I was proud to recognize May 15 – 21, 2022, as National Police Appreciation Week and honor the Independence Police Department and state and federal law enforcement officers who serve and protect us with courage and dedication.

There are more than 800,000 law enforcement officers serving in communities across the United States, including the dedicated members of the Independence Police Department. Each of them plays an essential role in safeguarding the rights and freedoms of residents and visitors

Independence Police do more than police our City, they are essential members of our community who support our residents and businesses and know the streets like the back of their hands. Independence is a premiere community because our officers meet the call of duty to ensure the security of our neighborhoods. We respect and honor your courage and salute your sacrifice.

Established by a joint resolution of Congress in 1962, National Police Week *also pays tribute* to fallen officers and their families.

This week the U.S. Senate passed a bipartisan resolution honoring the 576 law enforcement officers who were killed in the line of duty in 2021, along with 92 officers lost to date in 2022.

During National Police Appreciation Week, officers participated in morning announcement at Independence High School including Officer Bryan Vitron and Argo from the K-9 unit. It was a wonderful way for the police officers and students to meet and get to know each other.



Earlier this month, Independence Police were invited to speak about current scams targeting older adults at the **Senior Citizens of Independence** lunch.



In his **Scam Alert** presentation, Officer Jimmy Green explained that phone and internet scams are common across the country. These telephone and internet “scammers” often pose as law enforcement officials looking for bail money for a distant relative or contest officials claiming to be calling to award large sweepstake prizes. *These individuals are con artists.*

Officer Green explained to the group how the different scams work and how to identify and avoid becoming a victim.

Weekly Finance Review



Read Finance Director Vern Blaze’s [Weekly Review for May 20, 2022 here.](#)

INDEPENDENCE ATHLETIC BOOSTERS CLUB Annual Walk Around – May 23, 2022



Over the past year donations to the Independence Athletic Boosters Club helped to fund major facility and equipment upgrades including new floors in the training and weight rooms, replacement of the baseball field backstop, and the purchase of muscle recovery equipment used by all athletes.

On **Monday, May 23**, student athletes will be going door-to-door for the annual **Walk Around fundraiser**. Donations can also be mailed or sent electronically through the Independence Athletic Boosters website iab.ptboard.com or by scanning the QR Code.



The [Independence Boosters Club](#) is now a 5013C for tax deductive donations.

Please visit the Independence Athletic Boosters Club website or follow them on **Twitter @Indy_Boosters** for team updates and information about meetings and volunteer opportunities.

Story Walk



The Independence Branch of the Cuyahoga County Library installed the first 2022 StoryWalk® around Liberty Playground and Elmwood Park this month.

StoryWalk® is an innovative approach to motivate children and adults to read and enjoy the outdoors. Laminated pages from a children's book are attached to wooden stakes and installed along an outdoor path. As families stroll down the trail, they are directed to the next page in the story.

The first story walk, ***Bird Watch*** by Christie Matheson, begins with a welcome sign at the base of the arch to Liberty Playground and the first page of the book is on the other side of the bridge, to the right.

The pages of the book wrap around the playground to the Kiwanis Pavilion, then along the ball fields to finish near the driveway to the Old Rec Center building. The story invites readers to find birds on each page, counting down from ten (10) Black-capped Chickadees to one (1) unidentified but well-known night bird. The natural setting invites readers to look around them as they enjoy the story to see if they can find any of these birds in their own environment.

Children's Librarian Kathy Roach said, "I love that so many of the birds and other critters in the book can be spotted in the area where the story boards are in Elmwood Park."

The Independence Library installed its first story walk in July of 2020 during the pandemic to give families a safe, socially distanced way to enjoy stories together and to get some exercise at the same time. Since the first story walk, the Independence Library has shared seven (7) wonderful, interactive stories with the Independence community, and they look forward to doing more this summer.

Tea Party Week

There is something about tea parties that sparks children's imaginations and allows them to have fun dressing up, sipping "tea," eating treats, and acting like adults. That's why this was a tea-riffic week at the Civic Center, where there were themed parties for people of all ages!



On Tuesday and Wednesday, the youngest tea party go-ers came dressed as fairies, mermaid, lost boys, pirates, and Peter Pan to go on an adventure at the "Never, Never Land Tea Party." It was a nod to Peter Pan and "a place where dreams are born."



For six- to twelve-year-olds and their families, the theme was "Alice & The Mad Hatter's Wonderland Tea Party." Everyone traveled down the rabbit hole to Wonderland to join Alice and the Mad Hatter for a tea party. The adventure came complete with an iced tea tasting.



Our tea party week concluded on Thursday with a Victorian Tea Party where guests dressed in their Sunday best, enjoyed a light lunch, tea, and being with each other while listening to the musical talents of Michael Abbadini.



Thank you to the entire Community Services Team, volunteers and our guests of all ages who helped to make our annual tea party week a beau-**tea**-ful one!

Weekly Finance Review



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Memorial Day



The City of Independence will host its annual Memorial Day Services and Procession on Monday, May 30, 2022. The services and procession are long-standing traditions that honor and commemorate those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms.

The ceremony will begin at 9:30 AM at the Veterans Monument on Public Square. Immediately after the service and wreath-laying ceremony, there will be a procession to Maple Shade Cemetery where a short, graveside service will take place.

Limited seating will be available on Public Square, and residents are encouraged to bring a folding chair or blanket. There will be more information in next Friday's Weekly Update.

If you know someone who would like to **subscribe to Mayor Kurtz's Weekly Updates**, please ask them to email their name to CityHall@IndependenceOhio.org