



Discover 419



A SLICE OF LIFE PIZZA SHOPS FARING WELL

By Alexa Scherzinger
Staff Writer

Months of shutdowns and quarantines due to the COVID-19 pandemic have wreaked havoc on most of the restaurant industry. There is an exception, however: Pizza shops.

While other eateries lost sales when their dining rooms were forced to close, only a small percent of most pizza restaurants' sales came from dine-in patrons in the first place. As an industry that already ran almost entirely on pickup and delivery, there was no one better prepared for a pandemic than pizza people.

At Dougie John's pizza in Findlay, there's been a 25% increase in sales since this time last year. In addition to the standard pickup and delivery, the restaurant had been offering curbside pickup since its opening in 2017.

"We feel like we had such a strong business model that was already pandemic-ready," said Douglas Craig, the owner and the man behind the restaurant's name. "Our customer base already knew what to expect with curbside."

Craig's business also offered a take-and-bake pizza option, offering customers the opportunity to pickup a premade, uncooked pizza to pop it in the oven at home. This also lent itself to pandemic

precautions.

"I feel like we're blessed to be in the pizza segment right now," Craig said. "I feel sad for some of the other restaurants that really relied on dine-in."

The socially distanced business model worked so well this year that Craig has begun preparations to franchise his business, which already had one other location in Ottawa that opened last year.

"Overall, it's been a positive for us," Craig said.

Not every pizza manager felt the same, though.

Just a few blocks from Dougie John's down Main Street, Joshua Elchert runs

Continued on page 3



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Continued from page 1

AJ's Heavenly Pizza, which also has a location in Tiffin. AJ's celebrated its 10-year anniversary in Findlay in March.

It's not that AJ's is struggling financially — the business is doing 30-40% better than this time last year. But Elchert is missing his former ability to help people who need it the most.

"COVID affected our ability to give back to the community," Elchert said.

The restaurant's pay-it-forward program has been more difficult in times when everything needs constant sanitation. And, when schools first closed down last spring, Elchert worked to provide meals to students who wouldn't have had another way to get lunch.

"We've made the changes to make our staff and customers feel safe, but we're anxious to get back to the way things were before," he said. "Working in a kitchen by a 500-degree oven with a mask on can be taxing."

As for sanitation measures, most places have adopted the same practices: masks on all the time, more handwashing, and more hand sanitizer placed around the store. Little Caesars,

however, was prepared in a different way.

Two or three years ago, the Little Caesar's on Main Street in downtown Findlay began using a "pizza portal." It's essentially a robotic storage system on which customers can enter a code and be handed their order without having to interact with a person.

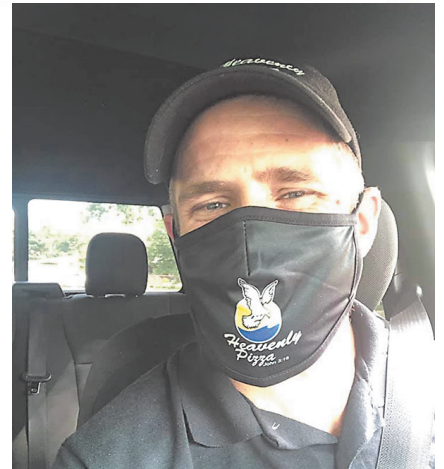
"People have been using the portal more" since the pandemic, said manager Jason Smith. "We've had a slight increase in sales as well."

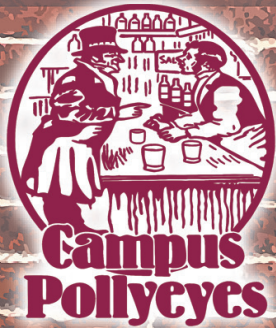
Craig also wanted to limit human-to-human contact. Three weeks ago, he decided to shut down his dining room to limit exposure.

While AJ's hasn't done that yet, Elchert said there are usually just one or two people at a time that sit down to eat. Additionally, AJ's hired an extra person just to clean frequently used surfaces.

And despite all the challenges, Elchert remains grateful.

"Findlay has been a great community to us, even before the pandemic," he said. "We're so thankful for our community."





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Jan Brindle
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Humans of Findlay is a documentary project based on the blog “Humans of New York.” The project was created to introduce many of the unique people of Findlay, Ohio. The man behind the lens and the project is Dave Morrow. Morrow has interviewed over 700 people of Findlay, ranging from age 5 to 102 years old, with a wide range of diversity and backgrounds. Jenna Wilkins has joined Dave in continuing the Humans of Findlay project.

On April 4, 2018, a proclamation was signed by Mayor Lydia Mihalik designating the day as “Humans of Findlay Day.” Each of the stories have been read up to 30,000 times, and can be located on humansoffindlay.com, Humans of Findlay Facebook page, as well as in this monthly magazine. Know someone that you feel should be featured? Send a nomination on the Facebook page.

ELLA KRAMER



We, as a people, love heroes. We visualize them as wearing badges or uniforms, rushing into burning buildings or protecting us from harm. I have learned not all heroes wear capes. Many live in the shadows, quietly doing their part and are never recognized. May I share with you one such hero I discovered, a nine-year-old young lady, Miss Ella Kramer? Ella is nine years old and is in the fourth grade. She loves math and at lunch likes nothing better than “bosco” sticks, yummy bread sticks filled with cheese and pepperoni. She has an older sister, two younger brothers and a baby sister

due to be born very soon.

Ella is a second-year member of Silver Blades where she is learning to become a figure skater. She is excited to be part of the upcoming “Under the Sea” program where she will skate dressed as an octopus!

Ella is an avid lover of animals. Her favorite is horses. She has ridden “Western-style” in horse camps. She loves how horses do tricks. She is quietly working on convincing her dad, that she really, really needs a Bay horse, brown with black mane and tail. In addition to horses, she loves cats and has two of her own. One’s name is Spencer, (pictured) and the other is named Cuco. Her dream is to one day become a veterinarian and run a Humane Society where the dogs are not kept in cages!

Ella lives in the country and loves playing outside, exploring the woods and fields. In the Spring, Ella enjoys seeing the new flowers, in the Fall, the beautiful orange and red leaves. There is a nearby creek where she fishes for crawdads. She caught 72 of them one time. She always lets them go free, back to their homes. Here is the hero part of this special young lady. Three years ago, her little brother,

then only three years old, was diagnosed with cancer and her family’s daily life changed drastically. There were constant visits to The Children’s Hospital where her parents and baby brother would be gone for days. The cancer, cancer treatment, the stress and fear that invaded the family and the focus that was on keeping her brother alive, took much of the family’s energy and attention.

This then six-year-old became a trooper, quietly giving constant love and support to her parents, caring for and staying close by the side of her brother when he was home and very ill. She would, on her own, help her parents pack for their weekly trip to the hospital. For three years, until the cancer went into remission, Ella was the quiet, calm strength of her family. Ella never complained or asked for any special favors or attention, while she quietly kept herself busy, listening to country music and reading Harry Potter, to pass the time when the attention was on her little brother.

This little angel, a compassionate, loving daughter and sister, has a spirit of love and selflessness that most adults never attain in a lifetime. To me that makes her a hero.

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Healthy resolutions that are easy to keep

The dawn of a new year is a great time to take stock of the year that just passed and set goals for the next 12 months. Resolutions focused on improving personal health are especially popular, and for good reason. Improving one's overall health can have positive implications for years to come.

Even with the best intentions, resolutions have historically proven hard to keep. Simplifying health-based resolutions can lead to a higher success rate and a healthier you.

- **Walk more.** It is easy to get preoccupied with the "10,000 steps per day" mantra that many people follow and that certain fitness trackers promote. Walking 10,000 steps daily, which equates to roughly five miles per day, is a healthy goal, but it may not be realistic for everyone. Take stock of how many steps you currently take each day, and then resolve to walk 2,000 more. As your body acclimates to walking more, add another 2,000 steps, continuing to do so until you reach 10,000 steps.

- **Learn something new about being healthy.** Informed health decisions require gaining a greater understanding of your body. Rely on

a reputable source such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to learn more about how to be healthy.

- **Spend less time on social media.** Staring at your phone or tablet for multiple hours browsing tweets or checking messages might not be the best thing for your physical and mental health. Browsing the internet may take up time that could be better spent engaging in physical activity. According to Dr. Elia Abi-Jaoude, a staff psychiatrist at the Hospital for Sick Children and Toronto Western Hospital, various studies have shown how excessive social media usage can adversely affect relationships, sense of self, sleep, academic performance, and emotional well-being.

- **Eat more whole foods.** Whole foods, including vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, whole grains, and fish, contain various nutrients the body needs to function at peak capacity. These foods may help reduce the risk of many diseases and help people maintain healthy body weights. Start slowly by introducing a new whole food to your diet each day. A gradual approach is more manageable than going on a drastic diet.

- **Avoid sweetened beverages.** You are what you eat, but also what you drink. A report published in 2006 in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition found consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, particularly carbonated soft drinks, may be a key contributor in the epidemic of overweight and obesity. Skip sweetened beverages (even fruit juices can be unhealthy if consumed in excess) and opt for more water or unsweetened teas.

- **Find a physical activity you like.** Rather than resolving to join the gym or signing up for a 5K because it's what everyone is doing, find a physical activity you truly enjoy and aim to do it a few times a week. Maybe it's a sport like tennis or recreational cycling with the family. But if the idea of a gym membership excites you, then by all means sign up.

Avoid restrictive health and wellness resolutions that can be unsustainable. By downsizing expectations and taking small steps en route to your goals, you may be more motivated to stay the course and realize your resolutions.

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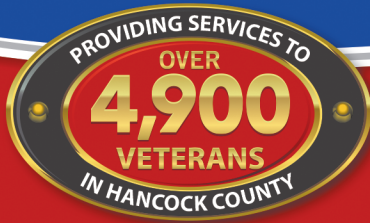
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We all can be reached at 419-424-7036.

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Wreaths Across America to expand in 2021

Just a few weeks ago, the Wreaths Across America project happened in Arlington, Benton Ridge and Maple Grove cemeteries and for 2021 we would like to see it expanded to more locations across the county. The Maple Grove site was started and coordinated by Jon Brumbaugh in 2016 for his Eagle Scout project. In 2020, Redeemer Lutheran Church added Arlington and the Fort Findlay Daughters of the American Revolution Chapter coordinated the Benton Ridge site.

We are going to hold an informational meeting in March to provide details, timelines and support for people who are interested in helping expand this effort in Hancock County. If you are interested in more details or in attending the Zoom meeting, please email Nichole Coleman, CVSO/Executive Director at nrcoleman@co.hancock.oh.us or call her at 419-424-7036 Ext. 5.



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DOG TAGS AND COMBAT BOOTS



Charlie Huston Navy, 1964-1970

Dave Morrow is a 60 year old peacetime veteran of the USAF and Utah Army National Guard. He was an educator and an EMT. Dave is currently a documentary photographer and writer. He created the website <https://dogtagsandcombatboots.org/> to share the stories of our Veterans. The site is dedicated to the stories of Vietnam Veterans and to the veteran Women Warriors of Ohio. **It is hoped to be a place for healing.**

Charlie Huston's birth date is memorable, of course to him and his mother, but also for the fact he was born December 8th, 1941 in the Pearl Harbor Naval Hospital. His mother had watched through the window of her hospital room as the Japanese bombers flew by bombing the base and went into labor!

His parents were originally from Findlay. After his father graduated from Findlay College in 1938, he enlisted into the Navy becoming an officer and a pilot. His father flew Kingfisher observation aircraft and PBY sea planes during WWII and later years of service. In 1964 Charlie's dad retired from the Navy, returned to Findlay and for the next 26 years was the Safety Director for the City of Findlay.

Charlie's family (which also included one brother and two sisters) was always on the move during his growing up years

due to his dad's service. Charlie would attend 14 schools during his 12 years of education. He graduated from Los Fresnos High School in South Texas at the age of seventeen, one of 40 seniors in his class. His parent's being "officially" residents of Findlay brought Charlie back to Ohio where he attended Bowling Green State University. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and Geology. Next stop for him was the US Navy where Charlie entered Aviation Officer Candidate school in Pensacola Florida. Knowing his eyesight would not allow him to become a pilot he trained as a bombardier/navigator officer. (His father was able to be with him when he was commissioned.)

After OCS Charlie spent the next year in flight school learning about the Douglas A3 Skywarrior. This aircraft was nicknamed "The Whale" as

it was the heaviest aircraft to launch from aircraft carriers. Originally designed for bomber duty, it had been converted to a long-range aerial refueling tanker. Charlie's A3 squadron was assigned to the aircraft carrier Coral Sea. For six months the Coral Sea was stationed in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. The A3's would meet and refuel aircraft returning from bombing runs in North Vietnam.

After his first tour at sea Charlie returned to Virginia Beach where he trained on the new Grumman A-6 Intruder, a twin jet attack aircraft capable of carrying a payload of 28 500-pound bombs while launching off an aircraft carrier. The unique cockpit design had the pilot and bombardier/navigator sitting side by side. (The A-6 would drop more ordnance than B-52's during the Vietnam War.) His squadron, VA 85, was assigned

to the carrier USS America and dispatched to the South China Sea. In addition to the A-6 being utilized bombing hard targets in North Vietnam which included railroads, bridges, roads, oil facilities and runways, four of the twelve A-6's in his squadron were specifically set up with guided missiles. Their primary targets were North Vietnamese entrenched and mobile SAM launching sites.

Charlie and his pilot alternated every other mission between doing bombing runs to flying seek out and destroy missions of VC SAM sites. On SAM missions they would "tempt" the VC by "allowing" their plane to be tagged by the brief intermittent radar bursts from the ground. Charlie's job was to recognize the radar signal, lock on it and quickly fire missiles that would follow the signal back to the target.

(As our conversation came to an end Charlie shared one more incident with me that had earned himself and his pilot being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. He has never shared it before as he never wanted the accolades and he had kept quiet back then so his mother would not find out how dangerous his work was.)

On August 31st, 1968 his plane was assigned to seek out SAM sites. As they flew over North Vietnam their plane was tagged and locked on by enemy radar. Two SAM missiles were immediately launched towards their plane. The two-man crew calmly held their position with SAM's inbound while Charlie locked on the signal and fired a missile at the active SAM site. Fortunately, their missile was faster and destroyed the mobile launching site which disabled the guidance systems of the two, fast approaching, SAM's.

Only then did the pilot break off and take evasive action while both men watched as the missiles passed closely by but now longer locked on them.

After six months off the coast of North Vietnam, Charlie's squadron rotated back to the states. He volunteered for a third tour but was assigned instead to train new bombardier/navigator officers.

Charlie documented most of his flights with a camera he always carried. He would make use of the ship's dark room to develop his pictures until the Navy started confiscating them as "Top Secret" due to their clarity and accuracy. He then began to ship his film back to the states to be developed into slides. (One such facility was located in Findlay Ohio.) Charlie served from 1964-1970, having earned the rank of Lieutenant before leaving

the Navy and moving to Findlay.

A skilled photographer, Charlie quickly found work with the Findlay police department as a crime scene and surveillance photographer. He was also called upon to take mug shots. This lasted for approximately 18 months. He worked for a bit at RCA before settling in at Millington Plastics, a plastic injection molding plant in Upper Sandusky that manufactured a variety of auto parts. He started out as a foreman and worked up to the General Supervisor position during his almost twenty years there.

His most important "success" there however was meeting an attractive single mom who worked in Quality Control at his plant. He was smitten by Joetta and they were married in 1973. Charlie adopted her

three children, Jonnica, Jason and Ryan as his own. They would add two more children, Jeremy and Benjamin, into their family. (The couple have seven grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.)

Charlie finished up the last six years of his working career at Molten Industries in Findlay where he wore several hats including being the manufacturing manager and then moving into the human resources manager position.

Now seventy-seven Charlie keeps busy and "young" building an antiques store in Bucyrus focusing on collecting "Findlay Glass" jars and oil lamps. He spends much of his free time visiting many local auctions. He is also still very skilled at the local pistol range. He has always been an avid hunter. Charlie is very proud of his family.



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YOUR BUSINESS CAN BRING HOPE TO SURVIVORS!

What a year it has been!

The pandemic and stay at home order created many unprecedented challenges for our community and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Given the current limitations of gatherings and the foreseen impacts of the pandemic on future gatherings, we will not be hosting the Chefs Take a Stand to End Domestic Violence event in 2021. In lieu of the event we are asking for your partnership in sponsoring our programs and services in 2021. Below are several sponsorship levels along with their benefit packages.

At Open Arms we not only help survivors of domestic violence and sexual violence; we work 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help end family violence in our community. We proudly provided much needed services to over 14,000 people this year.

We put your donations to work in our community by providing a wide variety of services to adults and children whose lives have been impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. As a donor to Open Arms, you enable us to help survivors begin healing from terrible wounds that can last a lifetime.

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Ashley Ritz
Executive Director

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- Logo on Open Arms website for three months
- Three exclusive social media recognition posts
- Logo recognition for three months on all agency email blasts
- Business card size ad in 2 Courier inserts

ENRICHMENT SPONSOR: \$500 (Covers the cost of domestic violence prevention educational programming to 20 school classes)

- Logo on Open Arms website for one month
- Two exclusive social media recognition posts
- Logo recognition for one month on all agency email blasts
- Business card size ad in 1 Courier insert

ADVOCACY SPONSOR: \$250 (Covers the cost of 10 hours of emergency room advocacy for survivors of sexual assault)

- Logo on Open Arms website for one month
- One exclusive social media recognition post
- Business card size ad in 1 Courier insert

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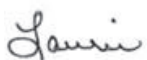
Hope House began as the vision of Sister Karen Elliott, the last remaining nun living in a convent behind St. Michael's Church in the heart of downtown Findlay. On more than one occasion, she would see people struggling to find a safe place to lay their head. Sister Karen saw a new purpose for the building in which she was living all alone. She rallied community leaders to embrace her idea and fill a critical need in the community. As a result, Findlay Hope House for the Homeless opened in November 1990 as a transitional shelter for women and children. Celebrating 30 years, the shelter remains in the same location, with the same purpose, to provide a transitional home for women and their children.

What began as a nine-bedroom shelter for women and children has now grown into five housing programs that serve over 2,600 women, men, and children a year. These individuals seek housing assistance because they are either homeless or on the brink of homelessness. The causes are numerous and result in families living in campgrounds, cars, a friend's couch, and low-rate motels. Hope House offers services that help Hancock County families move out of these situations and into housing that they can maintain on their own.

After experiencing dramatic growth in services over the last 30 years, Hope House is now the lead agency in our community for battling issues related to homelessness and poverty. With the pandemic of 2020, Hope House saw a dramatic increase in requests for services. Over 85% of individuals and families seeking eviction prevention assistance as a direct result of COVID-19 had never requested our help before. Our mission of eliminating homelessness and alleviating poverty in Hancock County became even more critical to the community.

Professional case management is a vital component of all our programs, including the transitional shelter. We believe that all people should be offered opportunities to build skills for long term solutions to break the cycles of poverty and homelessness. We believe that lasting change, and the resulting quality of life that accompanies it, is worth the time, guidance and resources needed to create it.

For more information about Hope House and the services we provide, to arrange a speaker for your organization, school or club, or to make a donation, please contact Laurie Poland, Development Director at 419-427-2848 or lpoland@findlayhopehouse.org. Hope House is a United Way Agency and independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.



Laurie Poland

Development Director

☎ 419-427-2848

✉ lpoland@findlayhopehouse.org



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