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Volume 1 Issue 10

Renewed Remembering:

The Newsletter of the Conneaut Area Historical Museum

We Remember

"Remembering" was the name of the original Conneaut Area Historical Society newsletter. Joan Barnett was the last editor, and with her death and the Covid pandemic the newsletter has not been published for a time. It seemed fitting to name this new version of the old newsletter "Renewed Remembering," in honor of the former editors including Louise Legeza and Joan Barnett who edited and published the newsletter for so many years. We hope you enjoy it!

The President's Paragraph

The Conneaut Area Historical Society wants to thank you for your continued support. As always, new members are welcome. You can call: 440-599-6011 with further questions or write to Conneaut Area Historical Society, P.O. Box 563, Conneaut Ohio, 44030. Our street address is: 518 Mill Street.

Jim Jones

Time Travel Tuesdays

Different Place- The Villa on the Lake Different Time – From 6 to 7 p.m. Light Refreshments After the Program Travel through time with Us on Time Travel Tuesday, Tuesday, October 17teenth from six to seven p.m. at the Villa on the Lake, when members of the Ashtabula County Historical Society will present a program about the Jenny Munger Museum. In This Issue: How Rowe School Got Its Name; Conneaut High School Corner; Ghostly Tales from Tinker Hollow; Dock Talk Tales, Patron Pages

Needed: Museum

We need Enthusiastic and Dedicated Volunteers to help us help the Conneaut Area Historical Museum realize its full historical potential. Even though we are closed for the season, we have not stopped working to improve the Conneaut Area Historical Museum. We could use some help organizing collections and updating the inventory.

Lend us your willing hands, hearts, and minds to help our museum grow. Be a Museum Volunteer!

Museum Steering Committee

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We Need Gently Used Notebooks

If you have some gently used binders that you are willing to donate to a new home, please bring them to the museum or give them to a museum officer or steering committee member.

We have twenty plus notebook collections and organizing! Since we have a limited amount of wall and floor space in the Museum, we are displaying in notebooks for your viewing and historical pleasure. We have Conneaut schools, covered bridges, businesses, churches, and maritime notebook collections. We also have extensive Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock collections and Conneaut Historical People collections including Maxine Morgan, John Tyler, and Louise Legeza.

How Rowe School Got Its Name

The Conneaut Courier, Wednesday, November 4, 1998 By Margaret Hoskins



Francis and Valedia Rowe standing in front of their Rowe homestead. They are the great grandparents of Margaret Hoskins.

At the turn of the century, it was the custom to name schools for the street that they were on. Conneaut had their Dean Avenue, 15th Street, Main Street, West Main Road, and Broad Street. So, Rowe School was called Rowe Street School.

In 1937, the School Board changed the school from fifth grade to nineth grade to kindergarten to grade twelve. The School Board changed the name of the school to Conneaut Township School. For three years the graduation class rings said Conneaut Township School. The community of East Conneaut objected to the change of names. The School Board officially voted to change the name to Rowe School.

Francis Asbery Rowe lived on Route 20 in East Conneaut in the old Rowe homestead, 282 East Main Road. (In later years it was the Chauncey Ferguson



EDITORIAL STAFF

ROW 1: Mit Anderson, Robin Prats, ROW 2: Maximum Sandy Feleh, Rosana Simmona, ROW 3: Sharia Musselman, Sandy Halter, Susan Risband, ROW 4: Jo Ann Peapanen, Consie Bennett, Circle Occupied, RCW 3: Mischael Pratt Bill Kennedy, Danny Marceny.

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home). He lived from 1833 to 1928. He was a "comrade at arms" during the Civil War. He had a vegetable farm and peddled his produce around town. Rowe School was built on the North end of the Rowe farm in 1916. Several additions have been added since.

Francis was a religious man and he led the choir at the First Methodist Church in Conneaut circa 1858. He had two

daughters, Mabel Loomis, and Helen Hammond. Among descendants in the Conneaut area are Glenn Loomis, Grace Loomis Mozena, Margaret Holdson Hoskins, Albert Loomis of North Kingsville, and Bruce Loomis of Jefferson. He was their great grandfather.

When Francis got up in years and was unable to work the farm, he had the land surveyed for building lots, circa 1900. His farm was bounded on the south side by Route 20; the west line was the Old Main Road; the east side by what is now Greg Sweets. He put in the following streets: Lee, Salem, Fair, Crown, Shenango, and Rowe Street. His son-in-law Lorenzo Loomis built many of the houses in that area.

This branch of the Rowe family originated in Germany. Nicholas Rauh was told to leave the country because he was a Christian in a Catholic country. He loved Moravian people so he migrated to Sharon, Connecticut, where the Moravians had an Indian Mission on Indian Lake. He changed his German name to Row. At a family reunion in 1914 in Detroit, they changed the name to Rowe. Rowe School was a High School from 1937 to 1964. Above is a page from the 1964 Rowe yearbook, the Viking Saga.



The 1928-1929 Sixth Grade class of Rowe School.





Conneaut News Herald May 1989 Conneaut High School Looks at First 100 Years By Suzanne Bair, Staff Writer

Conneaut High School alumni will visit from across the U.S. next week to share their successes and help celebrate the 100th commencement at the school.

Centennial celebration committee member Joyce Shellhammer said the group is putting the finishing

touches on plans for the festivities which will begin Monday with former CHS students presenting seminars to present students throughout next week.

Shellhammer said the school is asking all former Conneaut students and the entire community join in all the activities scheduled for the week. Those individuals who have not received invitations to the event should contact CHS.

The weekend activities will start with a six-thirty p.m. rehearsal for a mass band at the CHS band room, she said. An eight-thirty p.m. rehearsal for a mass choir will follow. Rehearsals will also be held 1 p.m. May 6 for the choir and 2:20 p.m. for the band with final rehearsals May 7 at 1 p.m. for both groups. Any alumni or community members interested in performing with the mass groups during a special concert at 3 p.m. May 7th should attend rehearsals organizers said.

Guest conductors will be CHS graduates John H. Pearson of Austin, Texas; Curtis Crews of Bay Village; and George "Chip" Thayer of Sparta.

Shellhammer said CHS will be open to the public May 6 at 1 p.m. for tours, hospitality rooms for alumni group gatherings, an arts festival display, and movies of past sports events.

The 1989 senior class will sponsor a "gala" dinner at 5:30 p.m. featuring guest speaker Tom Batta of the class of 1960. Batta has served since 1984 as tight end and special teams coach for the Minnesota Vikings. He was defensive coordinator at North Carolina State in 1983 and at Kansas from 1979 to 1982. Batta played football at Kent State University while earning a bachelor's degree.



I SEE YOU!!!

I see you! I am allowing you to see me because I understand that you are searching for ghosts. You have come to the right place. I decided to materialize for you and introduce you to the ghosts of Tinker Hollow. I am their spokesperson, and I will make it possible for you to meet them in person. I will save you some time in the woods getting scratched by bushes and frightened by tree branches creaking in the wind. I will save you from sitting under the bridge leading to my hollow, waiting for ghostly footsteps to stomp across it. I will introduce you to some of the generations of Tinkers who lived and worked in this hollow. They, who know them better than all of the mortal storytellers, will tell you the true stories. You can commence listening now.

Here is the first Tinker storyteller.

The people who tell and write stories about me don't mention my name. Some say they don't know it. My name is Sylvester Tinker, and I was born in England in



1773. I planned to stay in England until the British Navy changed my mind. The British Navy was conscripting men to travel across the Atlantic Ocean to fight the Americans. The Navy liked my blacksmithing skills and conscripted me to go along. After weeks at sea, I decided to jump ship when we reached Boston Harbor and lose myself in the American wilderness. Or that is what I tell my children. I really did jump ship and swim to Boston Harbor. Instead of the American wilderness, I found myself in the middle of the Battle of Boston Harbor on June 1, 1813.

After a very bloody battle, my ship, the HMS Shannon captured the American ship, the USS Chesapeake. Under the cover of cannon fire, I slipped overboard and swam to Boston Harbor. I let the prevailing winds, both the winds of war and peace blow me safely away from the Battle of Boston Harbor and head me toward the land of the Battle of Lake Erie with a stop in the southwest corner of Connecticut.

I worked as a blacksmith, bought land, and brought my wife, Sarah Riley Tinker, and our children to the Connecticut Western Reserve. Our son Riley was born in Conneaut in 1819, so you see how early we were here.

The Life Summary of Riley Tinker

When Riley Tinker was born on 24 May 1819, in Conneaut Township, Ashtabula, Ohio, United States, his father, Sylvester Tinker, was 46 and his mother, Sarah Riley, was 39. He married Elizabeth Sally Green on 4 July 1847, in Beaver Township, Crawford, Pennsylvania. They were the parents of at least 3 sons and 2 daughters. He died on 11 June 1897, in Chardon, at the age of 78, and was buried in Mentor Township, Lake, Ohio, United States.

Parents and Siblings

Sylvester Tinker. Born 1773. He died in Conneaut on February 9, 1820. Sarah Riley Tinker. Born 1780. Died on November 30, 1873, in Kingsville Tinker Hollow Foundry

An 1883 Conneaut Reporter story reveals how I died. I worked at a distillery near Conneaut and my coworkers found me floating in a vat



of hot mash. No, I did not lean over to take a sip of the mash, I leaned over to stir it, lost my balance, and fell in headfirst. I admit, I did drink a lot of grog, whiskey, and other spirits when I was a sailor, but I have been land sober for years. This time I sank instead of swimming to shore! What an end for a sailor who swam across Boston Harbor ten strokes ahead of the British!

I am Sarah Riley Tinker. I will continue the story from here until my sons are older



and established with businesses and families of their own and my daughters are securely married. After Sylvester drowned in the vat of hot mash, I looked after our children and kept our household together. My task was not an easy one. I survived Sylvester by 53 years and busy years they were! We worked the farm, and I encouraged my sons to develop their mechanical skills and my daughters to stand firmly on female feet and

depend on themselves before a husband. Sylvester had found pieces of bog iron on our property. and my children and I continued the search. We found enough bog iron to encourage William and Sylvester Jr. to move back home from Pennsylvania and look at Conneaut Creek with awakened eyes. Sylvester Jr. and William discovered how to harness the power of Conneaut Creek to operate their machinery. In 1835, they built their first foundry on the ridge, but soon moved it into the hollow. In 1839, my boys built an iron cupola furnace. They were two of the first foundries and first furnaces to be built in Ohio.

Sylvester and William owned the business. My other sons and daughters had other interests. I watched the foundry business grow with close attention and interest. My boys made miracles with flame and forge!



Sylvester and William were owners of the business, and they built a dam and race which powered the machine shop lathe. They used the lathe to make patterns for their castings. They

used the hardwood stands of trees in the area to make the charcoal they needed for smelting.

In the beginning, the bog iron likely supplied the foundry for its supply of ore, but by the 1850s the owners got their pig iron from Buffalo by way of Conneaut Harbor. By the mid-1850s, William and Sylvester Jr. had developed a mowing machine possibly inspired by the earlier McCormick invention.

Local historian Walter Jack wrote a description of the Tinker Mowing Machine in 1927. Walter Jack wrote that the Tinker Mower "cut a four and one-half foot swath while other machines cut four feet." The entire mower, including its iron nuts, was cast in the Tinker foundry. The Tinker Mower sold well in Ashtabula County and its surrounding counties, thanks to William's foresight and faith, and Sylvester's salesmanship.

When William mortgaged his fifteen-acre farm to help manufacture their mowing machine, his neighbors declared he would lose everything. Instead, within a year he had paid off his debts and invested their profits in their foundry, machine shop, and power delivery system. Sylvester's marketing methods sold many mowing machines. He would load several mowing machines on a long wagon, hitch his team to the wagon, and ride past Ashtabula and Trumbull County farms. When he spotted men working with scythes in the fields, he would unhitch the team and hook up one of the mowers. He would make several circuits of the meadow, and then return to his starting point and prepare to load the mower back on the wagon. By then, exhausted workmen dragging their scythes would gather around him. He rarely left a mowing demonstration without making a sale.

At a time when a well-paid farm hand earned about forty dollars a month, the cost of the mower shimmered from a one hundred to 125-dollar mountain peak high but scythe weary farmers and farm workers bought them. Even though the mowers were just distributed regionally, demand for them kept between 20 and 65 workers busy producing them at the foundry where workers earned wages of two to three dollars a day. Every worker had to know the entire manufacturing procedure, from molding metal to the last bolt.

The Civil War brought a scarcity of manpower to Ashtabula County farms, and boom times for the Tinker mower. Some sources estimate that at least 500 of them were sold during the four Civil War years. The Tinker foundry produced the Tinker Pepper Mill, a small, stationary threshing machine drawn by horsepower. The Tinkers also made other items including horse drawn drag saws, plow points, apple slicers, skillets, oxen shoes, stoves, a steam engine, and machine parts. The Tinkers invested part of their profits in their home, a twelve-room house that they built of stone from Conneaut Creek and brick made from clay deposits located nearby.

I died in November 1873, enjoying the Tinker house, my pride still growing for my sons William and Sylvester and for the rest of my children. I suppose you could call me one of the background ghosts of Tinker Hollow. I certainly do not flit around on dark nights or stomp up and down over the bridge. But I watch over the Hallow and if you listen carefully,



you can hear me whisper my story in the wind that rustles through the Tinker Hollow trees. I will let my son William continue our story.

I, William Tinker, son of Sylvester the British tar, have two ghost stories to tell you before I get back to my foundry work. The thing that set my foundry and Sylvester's apart from all others is that we made iron as hard as steel. Agents from several plow companies visited me, some offering bribes, to discover my secret. All I would say is that one side of my stirring ladle for molten metal was cold.

I told my brother Sylvester, and he told his son William. William told his son Fred, but Fred took the secret to eternity with him. I am proud of him. He cannot be bribed and there are some in this spirit world still trying to learn the secret! I died in 1889, but I left descendants to create more Tinker ghost stories. This ghost story is about my descendant William's left-handed wrench. In the early 1900s, business at the foundry had slowed down. He had to find outside jobs to keep the foundry going. He farmed. He worked for the Nickel Plate Railroad, and the Pittsburgh and Conneaut Dock Company.

One day a senior fellow worker told him to fetch a left-handed wrench from the tool room. On his way to the tool supply room, he ran into master mechanic James Tobin, who chided him for his foolishness.

Genuinely puzzled, my William said, "But there is such a wrench. I have one at home."

The next day, he took it to work with him. Fred Tinker still has the wrench.

I am not a chain dragging ghost, or one that wants to scare people. I just want to tell my story to people who will listen. My brother and family and I fashioned lives from trees and Conneaut Creek and sweat, and hard work. We built homes and businesses. We helped our neighbors, made their lives easier, contributed to our communities.

Operations ceased at my foundry between 1927 and 1929. The house was demolished in the 1950s and eventually all of the property I had worked so hard to develop and wrest a living from was also sold. Now it is haunted by the ghosts of my past. But I am not moaning in despair. My parents, the hardy Sylvester and the hard-working Sarah will not let me. Neither will my descendants who created a left-handed wrench on the forge and iron as hard as steel.

Then there is my life. I am Levi Tinker.. When I died in 1883, a friend of mine published comments about me in The Conneaut Reporter. My friend described me as "a genius of a mechanic," who could make anything with his hands. " The irony is that I had only one hand. I lost my right hand and arm in an accident in my father Sylvester's carding mill when I was just five years old. Working around my handicap, I built a house and machine shop, cultivated a garden, and repaired wagons.

In 1840, I established a machine shop and farm in Kingsville. I rebuilt my house in 1852 and in the process diverted running water into the house and kitchen from a deep gully outside my house. My friends came to my shop on Sundays and rainy days, and we sat around drinking cider and telling jokes. In the winter we cleared the upper floor for a dance floor and people came from miles around to dance. My

friend summed up my life by saying: "His wagons were good for forty years, his ax halves were true hickory, and his cider held no water."

I am Fred Tinker. I'll tell my own story. Uncle William. I grew up in the Hollow



and decided I wanted to follow in my father's footsteps, especially when he told me the secret of the Tinker iron as hard as steel. I remember one day back on the farm in the 1930s. Mother was churning butter and putting milk in the icebox when she heard a knock at the door. She answered and there stood a dapper city man with a brown fedora and a fishing pole in his hand.

"I'll give you a dollar for some of that fresh milk," the city slicker, who introduced himself as John Dillinger, said to

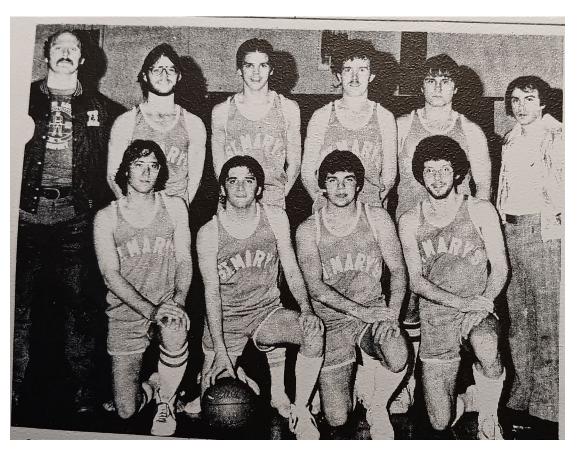
mother. Feeling guilty for overcharging him, she threw in several homemade donuts with the bottle of milk and told him where he could go fishing in the creek. He tipped his hat to her and headed down to Conneaut Creek.

"But there was something strange about him," mother said when she was telling me the story later. "He was wearing a funny vest and I could swear I saw a gun bulge in his pocket. Once more, he kept looking over his shoulder."

Yes, there are ghosts in Tinker Hollow. and you have heard some of their stories. Check out the rest of my family stories at:

<u>https://capturingconneauthistory.com/tales-from-tinker-hollow-one/</u> The complete version of this story, <u>https://capturingconneauthistory.com/video-ghostly-tales-from-tinker-hollow-two/</u> and

https://capturingconneauthistory.com/video-ghostly-tales-from-tinker-hollowthree-the-old-girdled-road/ Dock Talk Tales



Champtions of the Ashtabula County Catholic Youth Organization's Post -Season Tournament this year are the members of Conneaut's St. Mary's team. Kneeling from left are Paul Doran, Frank Picard, Greg Bemie, and Dave Glover.

Standing from left are Assistant Coach Steve Grant, Mike Irish, Dave Munson, son of our Industrial Engineer Clerk Mary Lou Munson, John Morris, Scott Lyon, son of our Electrician James Lyon, and Head Coach, our Tower Clerk, Mike Mucci. Mike Roach was absent from the picture. (From Dock Talk, April 1979.)

Willis Lyon, Machine Shop foreman, has compiled a record of 59 pints of blood or seven gallons, three pints during his years of regular donations. He is known by all of his associations as "Mr. Dependable." Our thanks to you "Bill" from all the employees and certainly from the many people who have received your donations over the years. (Dock Talk, December 1969)







Painesville Telegraph Photograph published on Find-a-Grave

"JACK" MAKES HOME IN ORE PILE

(This story was submitted by Ray Burlingham, and is a clipping from A. Lindgren's scrap book. It is datelined Conneaut Harbor, Ohio, April 16, 1940. This story should nudge the memories of some of our old-timers. Here it is. (A little detective work 83 years later uncovered a picture of "Jack" and her story in the Painesville Telegraph, dated April 17, 1940.)

This is the story of a lonely dog. This story, a life drama of hope and courage takes place at Conneaut Harbor on one of the world's busiest ore docks. It begins last Independence Day, when the Steamer Norway was alongside the harbor dock. Aboard the ship was a sleek female police dog with a sharp muzzle and pointed ears. Her proud master was the second cook, a man named Berger Torsen, of

Ashtabula. The way to a dog's heart is is stomach, and a ships galley can be a canine paradise. Berger therefore, was tops!

On this particular July 4, Berger left the boat leaving his dog behind in the cabin. The sailor never returned. That night during a heavy storm, he accidentally plunged into the harbor channel and was drowned.



Without her master, the dog made one more trip up the lakes. She protested Berger's absence so vigorously that the crew put her off on the next arrival at Conneaut Harbor. The dolorous animal remained on Dock Four as the weeks passed. Almost dialy she would ascend

the ore pileshunch down and peer steadfastly at the water, her head between her forefeet.

She attracted the attention of Dockmen and Bessemer and Lake Erie Switchmen. Justus Hankson was one of the first to "adopt" her and for the sake of a name, called her "Jack." But Jack was reluctant to make new friends. She was extremly timid and would flee behind the ore piles if anyone moved in her direction. Dockworkers at mealtime came to place scraps of food near the piles and after they had gone, Jack would come to eat.

The days grew bleak, the winds howled, the storms came, but Jack stayed. She found a sheltered spot in one of the piles and maintained her constant surveillance. Her hair grew long and shaggy and her feet and body turned the color of ore.

One day an accident befell her. She lost her footing and became pinned beween an ore pile and the tie wall. Her plight was discovered and she was lassoed with a rope and hauled out. The rescurers were George M. Hill, and electrician, Harold Starkey, bridge oiler, and William Kitinoja, watchman.

To this day the dog has refused companionship, keeping a daily vigil of the water.

Always agile and alert, she will come within a few feet of some of the men, especially if she is offered food.

Jaimer Rankinen, operator of the haulage house, and Alex Kantola, night foreman, managed to have her come within range of a camera the other day. The entreat, however, was a big chunk of bread.

"She's a friend of everyone on the docks," Mr. Rankinen explained. "And we all think she will become reconciled to the fact her master is gone and let us be her friends."

But the dog lives in fervrent hope her master will return.

(Dock Talk, February 1969)

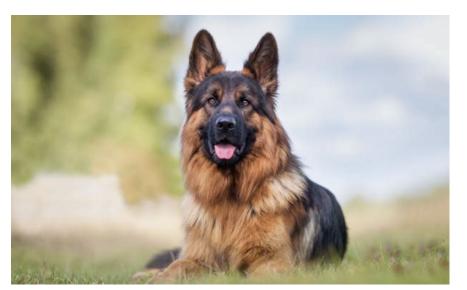
A little more detective work indicates that Berger Torsen arrived in New York Harbor on the ship Cymric from Norway on May 4, 1903. He was naturalized in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in April 1921. His naturalization record shows that he was born on February 5, 1880 in Norway.

The records show that Berger Torsen (Thorsen) worked on several ships after he arrived in the United States.

Berger's 1917 World War I draft registration describes his physical characteristic s as a medium build, short, with light brown hair and brown eyes. He lived with his brother Jens on Ninth Avenue in Milwaukee at the time that he registered for the draft and he worked as a steward for the Interlake Steamship Company.

The 1930 census reveals that Berger still lived in Wisconsin, this time in West Allis, and he listed his occupation as a steward on a retail freighter.

Berger Torsen is buried in East Conneaut Cemetery and compassion hopes that his faithful dog "Jack" was eventually buried with him.



Patron's Pages

Join Our Patrons Program!

The Conneaut Area Historical Museum is excited to announce a new Merchant Patron program which is available to any local business who desires to help our museum to function and improve. For \$50 per year (January to December) we will include your business name and phone number in the publications the museum produces, including a monthly newsletter, any future books the museum produces, and our website.

If interested, send your donation of \$50.00 to P.O. Box 563, Conneaut, Ohio 44030. We will include you in our list of great merchants and businesses in this area.



Gerdes Pharmacy 245 Main Street Conneaut, OH 44030 440-593-2578 Kathi's Golden Retrievers of Albion 11790 Penside Road Albion, PA 16401 814-756-5432

Leslie & Donald O'Bell 2 Bretenahl Place Suite C Bretenahl, OH 44108 Lynn Armington 48 Ranch Road Willoughby, OH 44094 440-951-3122 Photo Cabin O' Bliss taken in 1925. Grandparents Irus and Ellen Sheldon. Bliss experienced as they grew up in Conneaut in the early years of the 20th Century.

Marcy Funeral Home 208 Liberty Street Conneaut, OH 44030 440-593-4253 Port Conneaut FCU 1002 Broad Street Conneaut Ohio 44030 440-593-7350

Susanne Trigg Canfield, OH

Conneaut Area Historical Society Museum Membership Application



Single \$10.00	Couple \$15.00	
Family \$20.00	Patron \$50.00	_
Name	Address	
City	_ StateZip Code	

Phone Number_____

Would you be willing to volunteer at the Museum during the summer months or help us with winter projects?

We are open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from noon until 5 p.m., starting on Memorial Day and ending on Labor Day.

What day or time is best for you?

Thank you for your membership.

P.O. Box 563

Conneaut, Ohio 44030