



February 16, 2009

Fast Track

A quick look at ongoing stories that affect your everyday life

Lancaster

High school track and field

The issue:Lancaster track and field coach Doug Henwood suddenly died after suffering an arrhythmic cardiac arrest May 13.

At last check: After finishing the 2008 season with a number of assistant coaches working together, Jeff Koksai was named the Golden Gales' new head coach. Koksai, a distance running fixture in Lancaster, already has assumed coaching duties and has coached the Gales in a series of indoor track events.

What's next: Lancaster will open its track season April 4 at Hilliard Davidson.

What you can do: Read the *Eagle-Gazette*for updates on indoor track meets and a preview of the 2009 track season.

Fairfield County

Blood drives

The issue:The issue: Members of the Fairfield County Chapter of the American Red Cross encouraged residents to turn out to the county-wide blood drive Feb. 7. They especially wanted to see people with type O blood donate at the drive, which took place at the Robert K. Fox Family Y.

At last check: The Red Cross set its goal for the event at 30 units of blood and ended the day with 34.

What's next: Upcoming blood drives are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Feb. 17 at the Lancaster First Presbyterian Church; 1 to 7 p.m. Feb. 23 at the Johns Branch Library in Amanda; 3:30 to 8:30 p.m. Feb. 26 at Fairfield Medical Center; and 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Feb. 28 at the Clearcreek Township Fire Department in Stoutsville.

What you can do:N/A

Fairfield County

Marriage initiative

The issue:The Fairfield County Healthy Marriage Initiative, an organization that serves local congregations and agencies to benefit marriage, wants to work this year to improve Fairfield County's divorce rate. The Ohio Department of Health reported the county has a 70 percent divorce rate.

At last check: The Fairfield County Healthy Marriage Initiative held two informational meetings in January for church and community leaders to discuss how everyone can work together to improve the divorce rate.

What's next: A public signing of a Community Marriage Covenant and Healthy Marriage Policy by church and business leaders will take place at 1 p.m. March 13 at the Liberty Center, 951 Liberty Drive, Lancaster. A training session led by author Mike McManus also will take place for couples interested in becoming marriage mentors on March 13 and 14, also at the training center.

What you can do: Couples interested in becoming marriage mentors should call Teresa Sullivan at 740-654-0099 or e-mail her at tsullivan@fairfieldcc.org by March 2. Church leaders are encouraged to recommend couples for the training.

Fairfield County

Bookbags of hygiene supplies

The issue:For the past two years, Debra VanAtta has been filling bookbags with hygiene supplies and giving them to the homeless of Fairfield County during an annual Christmas Eve dinner at Nick's Pizza. She had collected about 100 backpacks when the *Eagle-Gazette*published the story. She wanted to get more backpacks, soap, toothpaste and other toiletries.

At last check:VanAtta said she gave out more than 250 backpacks around Christmas thanks to the generous donations of the community. She said ski jackets, backpacks, and blankets were among the items donated. She said it was "just awesome."

What's next:VanAtta said Fairfield County Job and Family Services contacted her about starting a similar program that gave backpacks to homeless members of the community. She has been invited to the Services' planning committee to help get the program started.

What you can do:VanAtta said backpacks and supplies are still needed. She said people can drop items they wish to donate at Fairfield County Job and Family Services in Lancaster.

