

# Chagrin

## VALLEY TIMES

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## Grove Hill Park planning delay raises friction

By SUE REID

Chagrin Falls Councilman Brian Drum expressed disappointment during Monday's meeting regarding the sudden cancellation of a planning meeting for the proposed Grove Hill Park. The Nov. 30 meeting was canceled the night before it was to have taken place via a notice from the village email.

"The next meeting is in March, and that's really disappointing to me," Mr. Drum said. "I feel like it means that any planning that had just begun to get underway will be deferred to spring. My fear is we will go through another year without meaningful progress on that property."

The last meeting of the commission was in late October, with the village committing to forecast a budget request for 2023 in the amount of \$50,000 toward the park's future development.

Mayor William Tomko said in response to Mr. Drum that there was no reason to meet, as plans were already set to address the Grove Hill retaining walls.

"Is there a plan?" Mr. Drum asked. In addition to discussion on those walls, the commission had talked about other items, such as recognitions and plantings, he said.

The village will work on the retaining walls in the spring, with plantings to be deferred to the fall, "so there is plenty of time to meet," Mayor Tomko said. "There's

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## Longtime administrator takes helm at Kenston

By ANASTASIA NICHOLAS

The Kenston Board of Education awarded Steven Sayers a contract Monday as superintendent with a salary of \$162,500. A 35-year educator with 20 years of superintendent experience, Mr. Sayers has been interim superintendent since August.

Former Superintendent Nancy Santilli earned \$144,255 annually.

The board unanimously voted to appoint Mr. Sayers until July 31, 2025. An administrator since 1994 and an educator since 1987, he has a "passion for public education," according to a press release by the board.

Board President Neysa Gaskins said, "His strong analytical skills and financial prowess will enable the district to become more financially sound while maintaining the high academic standards Kenston is known for."

"We are excited to welcome Mr. Sayers as the new superintendent of Kenston Local Schools," Ms. Gaskins said. "Mr. Sayers ... has already shown tremendous leadership in the few months that he has been at Kenston."

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Photo by Michael Steinberg

Her face says it all! At last Saturday's Deck the Falls, presented by Give! Chagrin Valley Women's League, Twinsburg resident Weason Schaefer, 1, was wowed by the creations of the elf balloon artist, who worked his magic for the hundreds who turned out. The event, which will continue from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. this Saturday (Dec. 17) features Santa Claus, a deejay, hot chocolate, holiday crafts, a scavenger hunt and more.

# Holiday magic

## Deck the Falls event enlivens holiday spirit

By SUE REID

Thanks to the 50-plus-member Give! Chagrin Valley Women's League, hundreds flocked Saturday to downtown Chagrin Falls for what is considered a beloved holiday tradition.

Deck the Falls, a long-standing holiday event featuring visits with Santa, hot chocolate and cookies, holiday crafts, a DJ dance party, elf-balloon artists and music performed by members of the Chagrin Falls High School orchestra, band and choir, was presented for all ages. It will continue this Saturday (Dec. 17) from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event, previously held in Chagrin Falls Township Hall, was on hiatus for two years due to the pandemic.

"It has evolved over many years," Give! Treasurer Tamara Shisila, of South Russell, explained, with the group beginning planning for this year's event

in early fall. She said they began by securing sponsorship, which is challenging in today's economy, then began thinking what they wanted the event to look like. "It's about bringing people to town to enjoy the village," she said.

Deck the Falls, one of the group's signature events, was presented in a limited fashion last year in the park.

"The last two years we had Deck the Falls take-home holiday boxes," Give! President Andrea Ayyappan, of Bainbridge, said, with in-person events in a limited fashion presented in the Triangle.

"I think that we found that, despite the weather, people like being outside with Santa," she said. "This year we are back in full force, getting back to the roots we have offered for the past five years."

Deck the Falls featured a scavenger hunt in an effort to promote and support local businesses, with participants receiving a special prize at the end that was distributed from the Chagrin Falls Popcorn Shop. Families of all ages enjoyed hot cocoa and pictures and visits with Santa, who held court in the Bandstand.

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ISSN 0194-3685

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