

# TOWNHALLER

*The official newsletter of Townhall II*



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## **Be Thankful Always**

Tiffany Rittenour, OCPS

Thanksgiving Day is an annual holiday when friends and family gather to celebrate the blessings of the past year. As we all know, this year has been uniquely challenging due to the pandemic and sometimes it can be difficult to keep a positive attitude. It's often easier to dwell on what we don't have than to be grateful for what we do. There are many reasons why it is important to display appreciation for the people and things that we have in our lives, but did you know that showing gratitude is also good for your health? People who are consistently thankful are usually in better health than those who are not. Research has shown that being grateful is the strongest connection to life satisfaction! Here's a list of why it's great to be grateful not only at Thanksgiving but all year long:

- Showing thanks to others to make them feel good
- Gratitude helps foster relationships
- Being thankful gives you confidence
- Thankfulness makes you a more positive person
- Being grateful can reduce stress levels
- Writing a gratitude journal can help you sleep better
- It just makes you happy

# Happenings this Month

## November 4th: National Stress Awareness Day

We all experience stress. The holidays are right around the corner and while they can be joyful, they can also be a stressor. Today, take some time to identify your stressors and the ones that you know will arise during this time. Create a plan to cope with these stressors now. The APA article [Stress effects on the body](#) explains in detail how harmful stress can be if we do not cope with it in a healthy manner. Remember to check out the mental health tips of the month as they can help reduce stress as well!

## November 11th: National Veterans Day

"A celebration to honor America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, and willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good."



Learn more about the history of Veterans Day [here](#) and ways to celebrate below.

## November 17th: National Take a Hike Day

Check out the [Portage County Park District](#) website for a list of parks and trails. It's not too late to join the [Wild Parks Challenge](#) either! Hike 8 different trails by December 31st and earn a walking staff and/or medallion to add to your staff!



## November 19th: National Play Monopoly Day



How long has it been since you played monopoly? This game, originally invented by Elizabeth Maggie, has been around since 1902. Get your family and friends ready for some good clean fun! Who will get to purchase Park Place and Boardwalk first?!

## November 26th: Thanksgiving Day



# Mental Health Tip of the Month

Sarah McCully, OCPS

**Never forget the importance of sleep. It is how the body rejuvenates, restores and repairs itself! Here are some tips to ensure a restful night's sleep.**

Bed Time and Wake Time Routines:

- One of the best ways to train your body to sleep is to maintain a relevantly consistent schedule. Try to go to bed and wake up around the same time every day!
- If you haven't been able to fall asleep after 20 minutes, get up and do something boring or calming until you start to feel sleepy and try again!
- Avoid caffeine or nicotine approximately 4 – 6 hours before going to bed! As we get older, our body starts to change the way it metabolizes these substances and that might make it more difficult to fall asleep.
- Try not to use your bed for anything other than sleeping and intimate relationships. That way, your body associates your bed only with sleep and times of intimacy. Often, we may bring lap tops to bed in an effort to get work done, or pay bills. It is best not to do this.
- Create a sleep ritual to help your body identify that it is time to go to sleep. Light stretching, meditation and/or prayer and reading are good examples of things you could try.
- Try to reduce screen time before bed. Research shows that using tv, tablets, smartphones, laptops or other electronic devices before bed delays your body's internal clock, suppresses melatonin and makes it more difficult to fall asleep. Create a digital curfew for not only yourself but your whole family that is at least 2 hours before bedtime. Maybe even create the rule of no screens in the bedroom if you haven't already!
- Often, when we can't fall asleep, we watch the clock. Although it is difficult, try to avoid this. Research shows that clock watching while trying to fall asleep creates anxiety which makes falling asleep just that much harder!



Project DAWN (Deaths avoided with Naloxone) is a prevention education program offered to any Portage County resident **FREE** of cost. Participants will learn how to perform rescue breathing, get emergency assistance, administer intranasal Naloxone, and identify treatment providers in Portage County during the 30 minute session.

After completing the session, each participant will receive a kit consisting of two doses of nasal Naloxone, one face mask for CPR, an instructional DVD, and referral information. Walk ins are welcome at anytime on Wednesdays or Thursdays and appointments can be made for Mondays and Tuesdays by calling Townhall II at 330.678.3006.

# Thoughtful Ways to Celebrate Veterans Day

Sarah Gehring, R.A.

As November begins, we look forward to sweater weather, the leaves changing, and Thanksgiving, but November is also time for another holiday, Veterans Day. November 11th is Veterans Day which is a day dedicated to showing appreciation to members of our military, past or present. Many people have the day off while others may be struggling to find thoughtful ways to celebrate. Here are some ways to honor veterans:

## 1. Participate in the National Two-Minutes of Silence

On Veterans Day, all Americans are invited to participate in the two-minute national moment of silence which is based on their local time zones. The moment of silence begins at 2:11 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. Taking the time to pause and reflect is a great way to show respect to the meaning of Veterans Day.

## 2. Fly the Flag

Veterans Day is an opportunity to fly the American flag! Make sure you are following the proper rules for displaying a flag. Not sure what those rules are? Check them out [here](#).

## 3. Ask Someone about their Service

We probably all know at least one person who has served and this is a great time to learn more about their service. This year conversations might be a little different, but pick up the phone and call a veteran to show appreciation. Not sure how to start the conversation? Check out some questions to help you out:

- What did you do in the military?
- Why did you choose to go into the service branch you did?
- How long did you serve?
- Did anyone else in your family serve?

When talking to Veterans be supportive about any details they are willing to share. They may not want to talk about their experiences and that is okay. Sometimes you do not have to say anything just listen and give them your full attention.

## Staff Spotlight

### Melissa Coffman



**Start Date:** July 7th, 2011

**Current Title:** Horizon House Operations Coordinator

**Previous Job Titles:** Residential Aide (Horizon House)

**Background in the field:** "When I was 3 years sober in Alcoholics Anonymous my sponsor at the time had me doing service work at Horizon House by attending the in house meeting, giving the clients rides to other meetings and sponsoring some of them. I was not looking for a job when the opportunity presented itself and I did not believe I had any experience for the position but quickly found out I had some of the best kind...some bitter experience with alcohol and drugs and some strong experience with recovery!!"

**Fun Fact about Melissa:** She is almost 43 years old and she just purchased her first bicycle and she feels like a kid when she rides it!

**Quote from Melissa:** "See you guys tomorrow, God willing, 8AM."