

Paint the Town: Local businesses creatively display their Trojan, community pride

BY LAINEY PRINCE
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► The Girard Chamber of Commerce invited community businesses to partake in the Under the Sea theme during the week of Homecoming and the Fall Festival. The theme was brainstormed and agreed upon by GHS Senior Ambassadors. Businesses could also show their school spirit by decorating in maroon and gold. There were three categories: Best in Theme, Best Trojan Spirit, and Best Overall. Homecoming candidates, which included Megan Bennett, Maddie Coester, Madison Cranston, and Maggie Niggemann, voted for the winners in the categories. This is a longstanding tradition. “The theme Under the Sea was chosen by the senior class this year; however, we also had some

who chose to do Trojan Spirit,” explained Chamber of Commerce Director Greg Scott. “Either way, I feel we had a good participation in Paint the Town.” The winner of Best in Theme was Craw-Kan, who depicted “A Monstrous Battle Under the Sea.” With much creativity, Craw-Kan brought to life an underwater battle between the Girard Trojans and the Prairie View Buffaloes. Long Branch Office Suites clenched the Best Trojan Spirit with its display of various GHS jerseys and memorabilia. They showcased the changes in uniforms over the decades. Finally, the Overall Winner was Eastside Café, which created a pirate theme. From anchors to helms to pirate ships, Eastside Café knocked the judges out of the water with their imagination. “Having the opportunity to help judge the ‘Paint the Town’ contest for the Fall

Festival was truly such an unforgettable experience,” exclaimed Cranston. “Walking around and seeing how much time, creativity, and heart our local businesses and community members poured into their decorations was so remarkable. The effort everyone put in showed that our town’s spirit reaches far beyond the school; it’s something shared by the entire community.” Cranston added, “I feel so grateful to have been a small part of something that brings everyone together and celebrates what makes Girard so special.” Girard businesses certainly went all out with this year’s theme, and this shows the community’s support and pride for the Girard Trojans.



This year’s Paint the Town Best Overall winner is Eastside Café. The business portrayed a pirate theme and showcased a photo opportunity perfect for attendees of the Fall Festival. 📷 PHILIP STEVENS/HOMETOWN GIRARD

Girard Fall Festival offered fun for all

BY JOSIE GRONAU
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► To welcome in the fall season, facilitate relationships between local businesses and community members, and celebrate GHS 2025 Fall Homecoming, Girard hosted its annual fall festival at the square Saturday, October 18. From 9 to 10 a.m. attendees could enjoy “Festival Fun” including craft and food vendors, kid games, a Girard History Museum scavenger hunt, Success Express 4-H chicken poop bingo, the Girard Public Library story walk, and the Homestead Girard/PCA corn crib. The parade began at 10 a.m. and honored Andrew Faucett as the grand marshal. In response to the recognition Faucett noted, Though all afternoon events were unfortunately canceled due to inclement weather, attendees still had a few hours to enjoy the wide variety of vendors. Crawford County Fair Association, Rodger & Maretta Graham, Cheney for Girard, Willow E Designs, Care to Share,



CK Lil Bit of Everything, The Ice House, The Sweet Pit, Lemonade Lagoon, Petals and Crumbs, Jim Jax Beading, Brittney Ellenberg, Lori Seal with K&K’s Crafty Pens & More, Holstines Creative Customs, Weaver Tropical Snow, Oh Sip, L&M Gardens, W.H. Farm Cafe Feed Wagon, Dream Maker Designs and Engraving LLC, Paul Shrum of Shrum’s Knives, Blissful Breads By Amanda, The Magpie’s Chest, Living Faith Church photo booth, CD3sDs, Iceberg’s Ice Cream, Offshore Tropix, Goings Enterprises LLC, Bone Creek 4-H Club, Regan’s Roots, Deeply Rooted at Home, Christopher’s Canning & Creations, Eternal Luxe Perm Jewelry, Branded Beauty, Yellowcoat Barbecue, AT&T, 1997 & Co, and Marshall Insurance Solutions.

These vendors offered classic food, such as 4-H’s pork loin on a stick, and many sweet treats, such as snow cones, freeze dried candy, fall baked goods and much more. There were also many plants and fall crafts for sale. In response to the day Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce Greg Scott noted, “Considering the weather conditions I feel we had a good turnout for the event. We had great support from the community. We’ll be back better than ever next year. I would like to thank City of Girard Public works for helping with the street closures, Girard Police and Fire Department for all their help, and a special thanks to the great event staff working so hard at putting on the great events.”

Pokes and Pancakes

BY JOSIE GRONAU
HOMETOWN GIRARD

►► Fall Festival can be a very busy day for many community members. Many community members may have also noticed the slight drop in temperature this weekend. As colder weather approaches, so does flu season. This year’s Pokes and Pancakes provided a convenient meal of pancake and sausage and offered free flu vaccination for attendees. The pancake feed was held in the GHS cafeteria, while vaccinations were offered in nearby classrooms from 7-9:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 18. Girard Medical Center provided the vaccinations for the shots, and Assistant Professor Annabeth Gilmore, with the Irene Ransom Bradley School of Nursing, organized PSU

nursing students, which included Allie Davied, Natalie Garland, Hannah Gray, Josie Jacquinot, Faith Keating, Julia Kerr, Logan Masguardt, Haley McCabe, and Josiah Rexwinkle. Gilmore noted, “It was a great way to get flu vaccines to people out in public and provide them with a convenient way to protect themselves from influenza.” Volunteers from the Girard Lions Club arrived before the event to begin flipping pancakes, cooking sausage, and setting up the order table. Members of GHS Kayettes arrived at 7 a.m. and began plating food, delivering it to tables, pouring drinks, and cleaning up after each group. These volunteers included Myleigh Franklin, Hayden Gatewood, Josie

Gronau, Emilee Hanks, Allison Huber, Augi Mooneyham, Chloe Pope, Raylelea Russell, Emily Setterstrom, and Meckenzie Wood. Throughout the day, the lions served close to 300 meals. The money raised from this event will support the Ken Rokos and Ivan Breneman Memorial Scholarship Fund, the Girard Food Pantry, various GHS scholarships, and the USD 248 Backpack Program. Lions Club member Bryan Wood noted, “The pancake feed is a wonderful opportunity for the Lions Club to connect with our community, share the work we do, and raise funds to support the causes we care about. We’re grateful for the incredible turnout and want to thank our community for showing up and supporting us.”



Keep Your Politics Out Of My Church

OPINION

How many of us have heard it said, “*Keep politics out of church!*” In many ways, I can agree. It would be a dirty and ungodly thing to turn our holy places into political battlegrounds. Such a scene might be reminiscent of Jesus tossing the tables in the temple and whipping the money changers. However, underneath this sentiment lies a sinister trick. The trickery is that anything remotely *political* is immediately evicted and unwelcome in the sanctuary. But do *church things* ever overlap with *political things*? They probably overlap more often than we care to admit. Here are a few overlaps that come to mind: the institution and definition of marriage, maleness, femaleness, and the Image of God, life in and out of the womb, procreation, and human sexuality... Suffice it to say, scripture speaks to just about everything in this world. To claim that a particular topic is *political* is, therefore, rather ironic, as it claims a certain *sanctuary* from the sanctuary of God’s Word. It is as if to decree that

this *political thing* is off limits to the church. I find that the older generations are more likely to abide by this unwritten social rule, whereas the younger generations seem to abide by a far less polite standard of social rules. In other words, the younger Americans do not mind talking “dirty politics” and popping the proverbial social bubble. If something is political, it is a fair guess that it is also scriptural. Unfortunately, even taxes find their place in scripture (Matthew 22:21). *Keep your politics out of my church!* As a pastor, this is nonsensical. How is someone going to tell me what I can or cannot say about a thing, when I can open up a bible passage that speaks to that very thing? But it is not just absurd. Underneath, it is sinister, insidious, nefarious. And perhaps the most devilish part of it all is that it is not by accident. Whose agenda might it sound like to claim that certain *political* things are off limits from the church and the pulpit? Who is served when the church is silent on issues concerning family, life, sexuality? Who wants a sheepish, mute,

impotent church? Hint: it’s not Jesus (Matthew 10:27). The truth is that we would be hard-pressed to find a political thing that is not also a scriptural thing. The real question Christian Americans need to wrestle with is this: Who has the last word? Scripture or politics? Christ or Caesar? Do these exist on equal planes? Is the Constitution to be considered in the same light as Holy Sacred Scripture? Depending on which church we attend (and what it confesses about scripture) will determine a lot about that question. Claiming a separation between church and state is one thing; demanding the church kneel in silent submission to politics is another. As a pastor, I see that this tension will lead to the same ancient fork-in-the-road: faithfulness vs idolatry. Faithfulness vs idolatry is the intersection that so many paths of culture and church lead. How often do we find ourselves at this divergence? Do politics and church play in the same sandbox? Oftentimes, they do. But like with so many other collisions between church and culture, there comes a time when

they become too big for the same sandbox, and they become mutually exclusive. Jesus says, “No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.” In Luke 16:13, Jesus was talking about money – but his admonition goes for any and all idols, including politics. It is idolatrous to claim that since something has a hint of politics, it is therefore untouchable by God’s Word. Claiming a certain *political immunity* is a dangerous game. Again, as a pastor, I see that as worshipping a false god. That god could very well be politics. But that god could also be the desire not to cause offense. But that offense is often unavoidable (1 Peter 2:7-8). Jesus taught his disciples that many would be offended by their preaching. Jesus taught his disciples to be bold. Jesus taught his disciples to be wary of those who would punish them for their proclamation (Matthew 10:17-18). Jesus warned them that their words would not be well-received. (Matthew 24:9). Jesus warned them that enemies

of God’s Word will spawn in the marketplace, in the arena, in the palace and even in the church (Matthew 24:11). I have found that the most venomous enemies of God actually come from within the church (Matthew 7:15). And yet, the truth must be proclaimed in and out of season. And those who hear will hear; and those who will not hear, will not hear (1 John 4:6). This is not a call for the church to become another lobbyist for a political party or candidate. The church has a much higher calling. This is a call that merely echoes the call that the Bride of Christ received from the beginning. The church is called to preach God’s truth to sinful man to bring him to repentance and salvation in Christ (Luke 24:47). This includes all people of all nations (Matthew 28:19), which certainly includes politics, politicians, and their constituents. President Abraham Lincoln fought this same fight. He stood at that same ancient fork. He popped the proverbial bubble. He was guilty of the social sin of bringing morality into politics. And he paid for it with his life. In

his 1858 House Divided Speech, he brought to light the hypocrisy of his day – free states in union with slave states. Lincoln challenged this ignorance and indifference and brought to bear the political rhetoric that was only finally resolved in war. This American father still convicts Americans some 170 years later. President Lincoln writes: Why are you so careful, so tender of this one wrong and no other? There is no place where you will allow it to be even called wrong! We must not call it wrong in the Free States because it is not there, and we must not call it wrong in the Slave States because it is there; we must not call it wrong in politics because that is bringing morality into politics; and we must not call it wrong in the pulpit because that is bringing politics into church... There is not a single place, according to you, where this wrong thing can properly be called wrong. *Respectfully submitted, Michael Hofmann (Girard, KS).*