

Kenyon

**OFFICE FOR
COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIPS**

BRIDGES



FALL '23

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Downtown Connector Trail, Mount Vernon, Ohio



FROM LOCAL GROUND

-BEN GARST



A field of varied vegetable crops at Creekside Farm.

When considering the rurality of Kenyon’s campus it can come as a surprise to some that, thanks to the multitude of farms that surround campus, it is also settled among an oasis of food. Driving toward campus from pretty much any nearby city, one will see a trend—houses, stores, streets and people giving way to fields of vegetables and corn and paddocks of livestock. What might be shocking though, is that it was only in the past ten years that Kenyon decided to purposefully utilize this practically backyard resource. The person currently in charge of acquiring Kenyon’s food is Dave Kraynak, the director of local purchasing with AVI Food Systems (the company in charge of everything food-related at Kenyon). Kraynak has been in the position for six years.

Kenyon switched to AVI ten years ago, noted Kraynak. He said, “the prior vendor just wouldn’t attempt to source food locally due to the liability of working with smaller vendors. We would and that’s why the college chose us”.

When asked, he estimated that about 40 percent of Kenyon’s food is sourced locally, with the majority of that coming in the form of protein—local beef, pork and dairy. But it’s not just big-ticket items that Kraynak searches Knox and surrounding counties for; goods like the humble lettuce head are also sourced, bought and prepared in massive quantities—and at a similarly eye watering price.

Over the course of several weeks during the highly productive Ohio summer growing season, the College often spends \$50,000-\$60,000 on produce, much of which comes from family run farms like that owned and operated by Jonathan Byler of Creekside Farm in Danville. His farm is a mere 10 miles as the crow flies from the College.

Byler was first connected to the college when Kraynak’s predecessor, John Marsh, found the operation during one of his drives around the county. At the time, Byler notes, he sold only retail, but upon hearing the massive quantities Kenyon wanted, became convinced to go into wholesale, which he has done ever since.



A large head of broccoli lovingly grown at Creekside Farm. Courtesy of Kenyon

Today Creekside Farm produces a wide variety of vegetables seen in the Peirce salad line: radish, spinach, swiss chard, parsley, brussel sprouts, broccoli, lettuces of all types, peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers.

When asked about “why local,” both Kraynak and Byler were adamant that there [is] a real difference. “It’s fresher, way fresher,” Byler noted. “I’m sure they can grow all this stuff as good anywhere as here, but by the time it gets to you it’s not as fresh as if you got it from us.” What’s more, the food he grows is largely organic, “unlike bigger growers, we don’t load with spray.”

While AVI has made tremendous strides in increasing the percentage and quality of food that is sourced locally, there are limitations. “Last time I calculated we are at 40% local origin, but going further is a challenge,” Kraynak stated. Part of that has to do with Ohio’s climate, which means that there is a long winter where it is virtually impossible to continue growing at such a scale.

To help keep local products a part of the Kenyon food scene, Kraynak is always on the prowl for the next local foodstuff. His next steps are to look for baked goods and honey. As for Byler, he has Brussel sprouts to pick, pack and send in the next few hours to Kenyon—a few miles down the road. ■



Creekside Farm fruit tree tunnels and greenhouse.

ART AND THE ANNEX

-ANNA FAHEY

Those who are familiar with The Gund's beloved glass-and-panel façade and airy, bright exhibition rooms know that Kenyon's contemporary art museum has provided the Knox County community and beyond with state-of-the-art exhibitions and programs for the past twelve years. The Gund, which is open to all and always free, features a dynamic rotation of exhibitions throughout the year and also owns a growing permanent collection that includes pieces from artists like Faith Ringgold, Julie Mehretu, and Pablo Picasso. New to The Gund's growing legacy, however, is the Annex, an art initiative nestled right in the heart of downtown Mount Vernon.

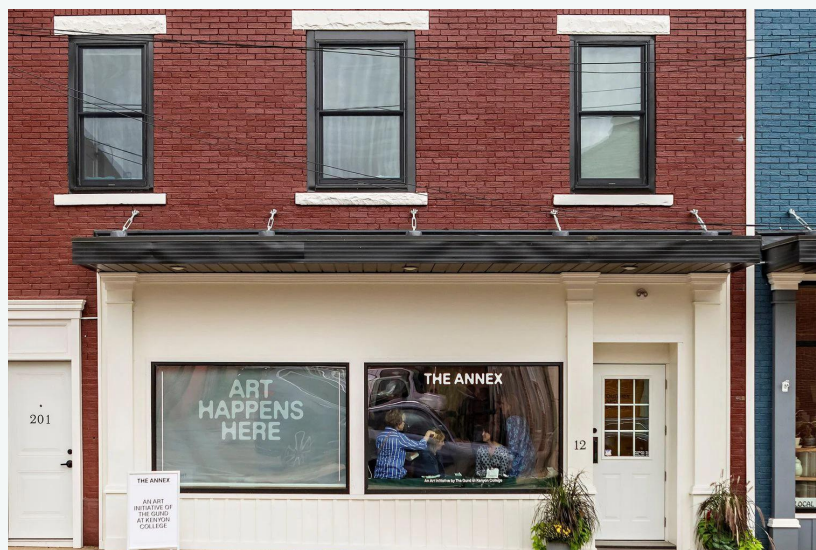
Located at 12 East Gambier St in a historic, restored storefront just a short walk from the Happy Bean Café, the Annex is a welcome—and welcoming—addition to Mount Vernon's vibrant downtown. Working with specific pieces and artists from The Gund's permanent collection for inspiration, the Annex was created to explore "how multigenerational audiences can learn together through creating and responding to art" according to The Gund's mission statement. In order to expand art-making outside of The Gund's more traditional museum-going experience, the Annex hosts free programs for all ages and experience levels. The creative potential of the entire Knox County community is in mind at the Annex with programs for local residents like workshops, art lessons, poetry readings, creative activities and other events. The community aspect of the initiative also goes both ways, with many of the programming and workshops taught by local Mount Vernon artists, like painter Jim Leitz and photographer Leslie Norman.



The warm invitation to create art and connect with others is perfectly embodied by the Annex's leader, Coordinator of Engagement and Public Programs Wynne Morgan. A graduate of Denison University, Morgan has a studio-art background and experience with alternative education practices, education coordination, and art history and research. She began working at the Annex this summer and has breathed life and energy into the space.

Whether you are a student or a parent, a professor or a retiree, a highschooler or in your forties, the Annex has fun and community waiting for you. Those interested in photography especially should head down to the Annex while its programming is centered around the breathtaking photography of Dawoud Bey, an artist from Queens whose honors include a MacArthur "Genius" Fellowship and a Guggenheim Fellowship and whose "name of piece" is a part of The Gund's permanent collection. So far, Annex-goers have enjoyed taking tintype photographs of themselves, constructing their own cameras, and weekly workshops with Norman. I encourage you to visit—as Morgan says, "art, and the Annex, is for everyone."

Opened in September, The Annex is full of natural light and stocked up with art supplies and cozy seating. Morgan says she feels invigorated by the creativity of the Mount Vernon art scene, and has relished forming relationships with different Knox County residents. As passersby wander past the Annex's large window front, Morgan is sure to wave at all of them. ■



The Annex, Mount Vernon, OH.

GOLFING IN THE HILLS

-CALEB NEWMAN



Vernon View Golf Course, Mount Vernon, OH
Courtesy of Vernon View

Knox County is nestled among rolling hills in Ohio, which are full of golf courses—many of which are frequented by students. “We are fortunate to have so many great public courses in our area and Central Ohio,” Kenyon Head Golf Coach Grant Wallace said.

While all the courses that are subsequently reviewed offer eighteen holes and are a short drive away from campus, each is unique. Golf courses are listed in alphabetical order.

Apple Valley Golf Course • 433 Clubhouse Drive • Howard, OH 43028

Since Apple Valley opened in 1972, it has been a favorite golfing spot of locals and travelers, who enjoy playing from April through November. The par 72 course has four tee boxes to choose from.

Owner Mark Mickley takes pride in the fact that Apple Valley has been a family owned course for over 40 years. “Since it’s our place, we really take a lot of pride and show a lot of self respect making sure it’s nice.”

Wallace has taken note, calling it a “friendly family-owned golf course.” Furthermore, he appreciates that the course is in good condition.

Apple Valley has hosted numerous tournaments. In 1977, the Division III NCAA National Championship came to Howard, Ohio. The course also hosts the Division 1 High School Regional Championship and the Ohio Public Links Championship.

“It’s an [advanced] golf course that can be challenging for real low handicap golfers,” Mickley said. “[It’s a] good tournament course.”

However, Apple Valley usually has the course set up so everyone can enjoy a round of golf. Mickley emphasized that the golf course is also good for golfers with a variety of skill-levels. “The good thing about this place is even if you’re just an average golfer...the majority of the holes here, you can just kind of run your shots up onto the green, so you don’t have to be a great player,” he said.

Regardless of whether one plays in a league or with a group of friends, golfers can enjoy snacks, drinks or a meal at the clubhouse. With its ability to seat 120 guests, the clubhouse is able to host events. “We’re proud of really going to work every day and giving it a real good effort every day,” Mickley said. “We do, I think, a pretty good job with our customer service. I think the whole operation is really a good first class place to come to and you’re definitely going to have good conditions.”

Chapel Hill Golf Course • 7516 Johnstown Road • Mount Vernon, OH 43050

Chapel Hill opened in 1996. There are five tees to choose from on the par 72 course that is open year round.

They host a variety of leagues and tournaments. Their main event is their Fallen Heroes fundraiser where they raise money for the Ohio Fallen Heroes Memorial organization.

Their signature feature is called "Golf until you drop." You pay one flat rate and then you can golf all day with a cart included. Additionally, some drinks and snacks are included in the rate.

Wallace enjoys being able to golf all day. "The 'all-inclusive' rate is fun."

Interestingly, Chapel Hill's clubhouse was once the Mount Vernon Bible College's chapel. The chapel now hosts a pro-shop and snack area. Maddie Friday '24, who golfs regularly, notes that it is a great place to rest halfway through a golf game. "[It is a] beautiful area to take a break."

Whether enjoying a single round or playing until you drop, Chapel Hill offers a variety of options for golfers.

Irish Hills Golf Course • 7020 Newark Road • Mount Vernon, OH 43050

A par 71 golf course, there are four tees to choose from at Irish Hills. The front nine holes were built in 1928, and the back nine holes were added in 1984.

There is a wide variety of leagues to play at Irish Hills, and they plan on adding more in 2024. Additionally, Irish Hills hosts a few tournaments. They have a platform where people can view the live scores on a smartphone in addition to the TVs in the clubhouse.

"One of our big advantages of what we do well is we leverage technology into the overall experience," the Director of Irish Hills Billy Barbour said. "We set up the events for most of the tournaments that come in and facilitate the prizes and just the overall experience."

The clubhouse hosts the pro-shop in addition to a bar where patrons can enjoy a drink, snack or meal. Friday describes the clubhouse as "well-kept and cozy."

Recently, Irish Hills bought a smoker with which Barbour stated that they can feed a little over 500 people and cook a variety of food, "anywhere from homemade mac and cheese, fall-off-the-bone pork ribs to filets, anything you can think of, we can make it."

Irish Hills can host a variety of events from birthday parties to corporate functions. In the offseason, they plan to have events centered around televised sporting events, such as the NFL playoffs.

Golfers can enjoy the course from April through October. During winter, Barbour does maintenance to ensure that the course is good to go in the spring.

Barbour hopes that people have revel in the outdoors when playing a round of golf. "We strive to make the course as playable as possible [and] to be enjoyable."



Irish Hills Golf Course, Mount Vernon, OH. Courtesy of Billy Barbour.

Vernon View Golf Course • 901 Beech Street • Mount Vernon, OH 43050

Golfers can enjoy playing at Vernon View from around the start of April to the end of November. Recently renovated in 2021, the par 72 course offers four tees to choose from.

The Phillips family purchased the course in 2021 and has made significant improvements since then. In addition, all five ponds have been redone and four more have been added. This winter, the Phillips family plans to redo all of the bridges to help with drainage.

Recently, Vernon View added an indoor golf course with Foresight GCHawk, so golfers don't have to put away their clubs once the weather turns chilly. There are over 350 courses available to choose from in the simulator.

"You can hang out with everybody in your group the whole time and talk and drink," said Charlie Phillips. "So, a little more social; some people like it for that."

Friday has noticed the changes being made to the course. "I am really proud of how Vernon View has improved over the last year and a half," she said. "They are clearly putting some serious work into the course and it is paying off."

The course hosts a number of company outings and fundraisers. Additionally, golfers can join one of the many leagues that Vernon View hosts.

In the clubhouse, golfers can enjoy a bratwurst or hot dog that comes from the family farm.

Regardless of whether one chooses to golf outside or inside, the Phillips family has put a lot of effort into making golf an enjoyable experience. "It's a pretty simple course," Phillips said. "But, it's a little tricky."

Fantastic Golf Options abound in Knox County.

Irish Hills Director Billy Barbour appreciates Kenyon students coming out to golf. "It seems like the [students] that are coming out to play are really enjoying the game and they really appreciate the overall experience and the value that they get," he said. "I just appreciate their business and love seeing the younger generation getting out and enjoying the game. So that's been really cool, and I want to give them a safe place to do it." ■

LOCAL CONNECTION TO A LEGEND

-BEN GARST

For those who stayed on campus for fall break in October, the third annual Johnny Appleseed Festival, organized by Experience Mount Vernon, offered plenty of food and fun to kick off the fall season. The idea for the festival, notes Todd Taylor, Board President of Experience Mount Vernon, was to offer the local community one last celebration of the summer season. "For us this is the last festival of the year," he said. "We feel like every part of every year is worth celebrating".

While the festival may have only just concluded its third run, the man and fruit that it celebrates go much further back. "Johnny Appleseed," or John Chapman, as his name is recorded in local land and voting records, purchased his first two personally owned properties in Mount Vernon in 1809. Today, as a 2018 Kenyon Collegian article humorously put it, "one [lot] is now a tire store; the other right on the banks of the shore [of the Kokosing river], is mostly underwater." The location of the festival last month, then, was fitting, as it was only about a block north of Main Street—still proximally connected to the plot where Chapman sewed the first apple seeds on his own land.

Those apple seeds, though, were very much not intended for mere eating. According to a 2014 article published by the Smithsonian, Chapman was primarily interested in apples for their use in brewing the favorite drink of the era - hard apple cider. To do this, men like Chapman needed land and money. Thus, for many years Chapman ran a profitable business traveling ahead of settlers moving West in the young and expanding United States, acquiring land by establishing permanent homesteads, which required the planting of several apple and peach trees. Chapman would then be granted the "proven land" before taking some of the apples those trees produced, brewing cider and then selling both the cider and the land itself for a profit and repeating the process many times over.

The festival commemorating the man and what might have been his favorite (and quite possibly most profitable) season, though, wasn't as much concerned with alcohol, let alone land speculation, but rather good family fun.

"The third [annual festival] was a success. Every year we add new 'flavors' to the festival - new [artisans], new food vendors - every year there is something new," said Tim Corrigan of The People's Bank of Mt Vernon, one of Experience Mount Vernon's community partners.



Johnny Appleseed



A festival attendee stirs a pot of seasonal kettle corn.

This year's offerings included, among many others, apple related food products like breads and granolas produced and sold by Miller's farm market stand, wooden craft goods crafted ASE woodworking, an assortment of food trucks and even a cider press demonstration presented by Kenyon's very own Brown Family Environmental Center.

Todd stressed, "This is a local event with all of our food and talent coming locally, we've found that giving the local talent and vendors access to the public is really key to making events like these successful."

The festival is part of a larger ongoing effort spearheaded by Experience Mount Vernon to make the city more active. "This follows right after the first Friday event" Todd said, who adds that the event has more than doubled in popularity since its inception. "The formula...for the event works well...and...it goes to show that you don't really know what you have locally, talent, products, history, until you look." ■



(L) Two Kenyon students inspect locally produced jewelry. (R) Brown Family Environmental Center postgraduate fellow, Claire Haynes, demonstrates an apple cider press.



Kenyon students peruse a selection of seasonal pumpkins for sale.

DENATURING NATURE

-ANNA FAHEY

Every semester, classes from across departments at Kenyon College head off campus with the intention of interacting with Knox County—in parks, businesses, hospitals, organizations and more—for what the College calls Community Engaged Learning (CEL) courses. Designed by Kenyon faculty in partnership with local organizations and the Office for Community Partnerships, CEL classes forge relationships throughout the county and work to address community needs while giving Kenyon students hands-on experiences around and off the Hill. Kenyon CEL offerings include partnerships with Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Ariel-Foundation Park, and Wiggin Street Elementary School, but other classes root their syllabi both in our local community and broader locations, working with groups in Columbus, Cleveland and even Quito, Ecuador.

Professor Alyssa Quinn, who joined Kenyon this fall as Assistant Professor of English, spent their summer making a big move to Mount Vernon and preparing for their first semester on the Hill. They also researched and designed a first-year English course titled Denaturing “Nature,” which works with the Kenyon College Grounds, the Kenyon Farm, and the Brown Family Environmental Center in its examination of the concept of “Nature” as a social construct. Students enrolled in the class take tours of the three locations and work to interact with them outside of the traditional notion of “Nature” and “Culture” as two separate realms.

“I really wanted to find some way to destabilize the binary between reading and thinking about ‘nature’ in the world,” Quinn said, “so it made sense to actually get outside a little bit.”

In addition to coordinating with different organizations and arranging tours of the three different facilities with David Heithaus, Claire Haynes, and Bethany McCarty, respectively, Quinn also spent a lot of time researching widely in order to provide students with a thorough and diverse understanding of nature writing. “It was a lot of work,” they said, “but I feel a lot of connection to the syllabus because of that.”



The Brown Family Environmental Center, home to many CEL programs.

Quinn's hard work shines through in the wonderful work and words of their students. Each time the class takes an outdoor field trip, the students are tasked with creating 'ecollages,' which asks students to "bring together, to collect, to form a mini ecosystem on the page." Invited to take risks and think outside the box, final projects ranged from handmade recipe books to poems to short films and more. Students have the opportunity to explore, bend and cross genres of art-making as they produce a total of three ecollage products inspired by their adventures.

Hayden Ashwroth '27, who was enrolled in Quinn's course this fall, testified to the enrichment gained from off-campus interaction in class. "One of the main themes of this course is interconnectivity in nature: how all life is inherently intertwined," he said. "Interacting with the BFEC and the Farm firsthand elevated my understanding of that concept, because nature was brought into the foreground. I realized that everything we talked about in class didn't have to be abstract—I could go out into the world and see it unfold on so many levels."

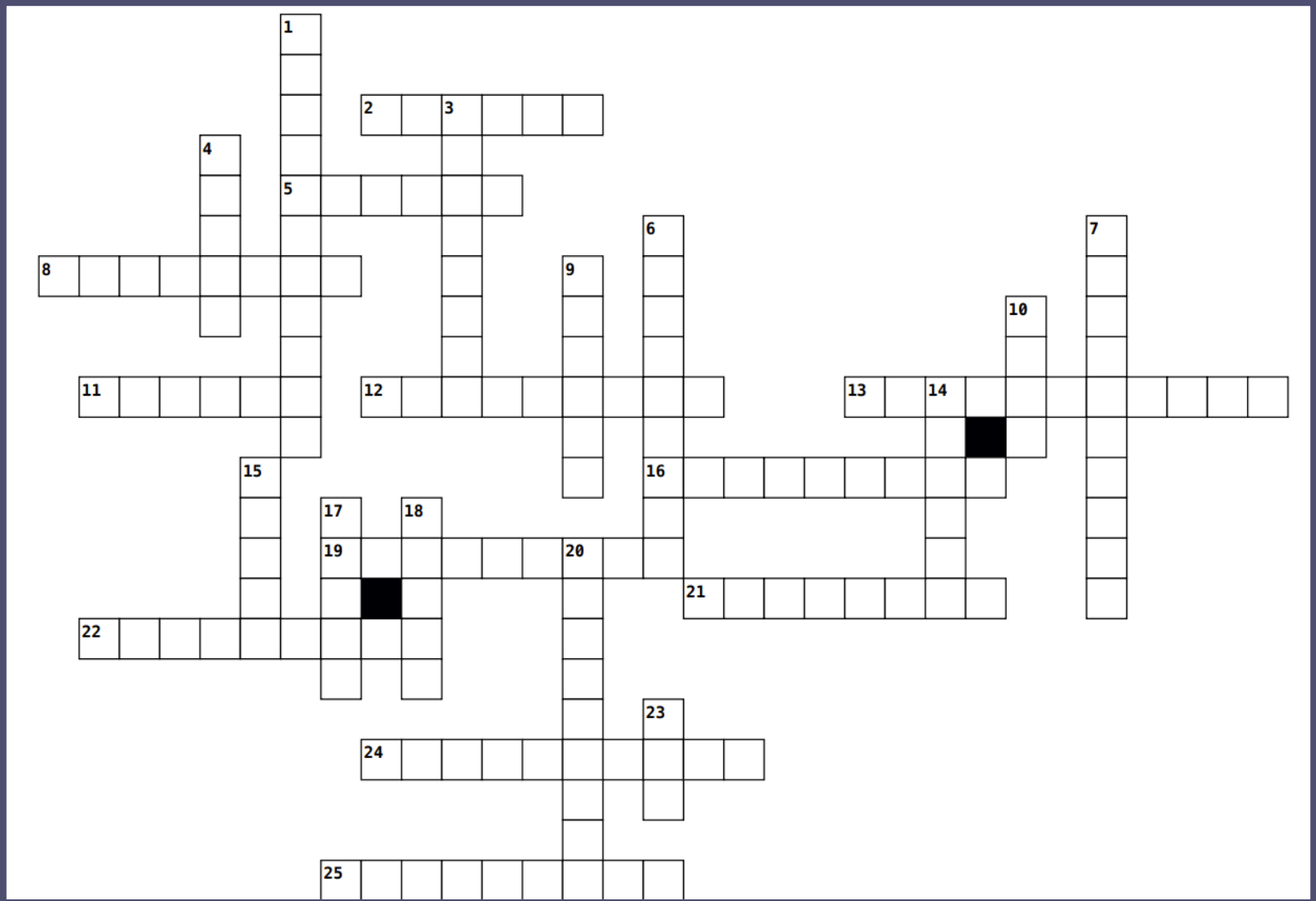
There's also a special sort of exploration and connection in this semester's Denaturing "Nature" offering: everyone in the class—including Quinn—is brand new to Kenyon. While CEL courses are fantastic ways to broaden any student-community relationship, this one is particularly suited to introducing Kenyon's greenest to Kenyon's greenery. ■



Students leaders from a CEL course organized music event.

FALL '23 CROSSWORD

-ANNA FAHEY



Across

Down

- 2. Academy award-winning actor and Kenyon alum
- 5. last name of Kenyon alum who stars in "How I Met Your Mother"
- 8. Last name of Kenyon's new president
- 11. Location of the Office for Community Partnerships
- 12. Most famous building on Kenyon College's campus
- 13. Popular Knox County golf course
- 16. U.S. Route that passes through Mount Vernon
- 19. Favorite Mount Vernon brunch spot
- 21. Number of statues in Mount Vernon's dog fountain
- 22. Downtown coffee shop
- 24. Name of the tallest building in Knox County
- 25. funky first name of Kenyon's founder

- 1. Name of 2012 movie filmed on Kenyon's campus
- 3. Opera house name
- 4. Name of Kenyon College club dedicated to the reality TV show "Survivor"
- 6. Name of a Knox County avenue and nearby town
- 7. Gambier bar
- 9. Academy award-winning actress and Kenyon alum
- 10. Local environmental center
- 14. Name of Kenyon's dining hall
- 15. Official name of Kenyon's athletic complex
- 17. New Mount Vernon location courtesy of the Gund
- 18. Famed hotel in Mount Vernon
- 20. Namesake of annual festival hosted in Mount Vernon
- 23. Nickname of a university in Mount Vernon

From the Editors



Anna Fahey '24



Caleb Newman '24



Ben Garst '25

On behalf of the Office of Community Partnerships (OCP) at Kenyon College, we extend a warm welcome to our Fall 2023 newsletter! Founded in 2014 and charged by the college with furthering the connections between members of the Kenyon community and those of the larger Knox County area, the OCP has a rich history of organizing and participating in initiatives and community based projects that foster a stronger local community.

We hope you enjoyed the latest newsletter highlights from ongoing campus OCP initiatives: increasing the number of community-engaged courses to the opening of a new art-focused co-op space, reviews of local golf courses and much more in between.

We hope our journalism encourages you to interact with and support our Knox County Community.



Kenyon College

OCP

Office for Community Partnerships