

Sunday
\$182⁰⁰
Savings

Year to date
savings: \$6,748



The September issue of Tri-County Health & Wellness Magazine takes a look at getting kids to eat healthy, bone loss, pet emergency care and more. It is part of today's edition.



Today's Sports Section includes the Hunting Guide Pages. These pages include articles on elk viewing, preparing young hunters, pheasant hunting, as well as information on the Allegheny National Forest.

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Josh Brock of Hoffman Appalachian Farm breaks apart a hop nugget left over from the fall harvest at his farm in St. Marys. (Photo by Katie Weidenboerner)

Hoffman hangs hopes on hops

By Katie Weidenboerner
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ST. MARYS — Clad in a weathered Penn State shirt, muddy work boots, and a face full of rebellious bristles, Josh Brock doesn't look like the typical entrepreneur.

But he's as passionate as any in describing his new endeavor, Hoffman Appalachian Farm.

In his second year of working the fields surrounding his childhood home on Taft Road in St. Marys, his modest hop yard is set to expand from 30 to 400 plants in the next year — a level of growth that still doesn't begin to meet demand.

Following the most recent hop harvest, Brock has spent long hours in the last days of the summer heat, plowing and heaving heavy rocks from the fields into a pickup truck in preparation for the farm's first planting of barley and rye — two other staples of the beer brewing process.

When asked how the fields came to be, the answer is both simple and complex.

It starts with a gentle smile, followed by the words, "I love beer," and is punctuated by a lengthy story of how an internship on a farm in Colorado coupled with a friend's urging to plant hops has led Brock to work a full-time job in State College, while also spending some weekends and most Mondays as a farmer in his hometown approximately one-and-a-half hours away.

"Just being outside all day and working with my hands is probably the nicest part of it," Brock said. "And a lot of this is luck. If my grandparents hadn't purchased this property I'm not sure I'd be here right now."

As Brock's worn hands trace the remains of the hop vines, which stand in wait to blossom next year, he says the farm is named "Hoffman Appalachian Farm," as a tribute to his grandparents Ray and Helen Hoffman. Brock will eventually be the third generation to call the land on Taft Road home, however he is the first in the family to work the fields.

As a startup, Brock said he owes a large part of his initial success to the dedication of a team of family and friends who have volunteered to help, often being lured by promise of payment in good company and ice cold beer.

He is also indebted to local farmers who have shared their knowledge and equipment to help bring the fields to life. A perennial plant that requires intensive infrastructure, Brock said it costs an average of \$10,000 per acre of hop yard. The crops grown on the farm also boast of being "certified naturally grown," a label which holds true to organic principals but is administered through evaluation by farmers of farms.

Hoffman's Appalachian Farm has generated a buzz among craft breweries and



In his second year of growing hops, Josh Brock of Hoffman Appalachian Farm is looking to expand his hop yard from 30 to 400 plants in the next year. (Photo submitted)

home brewers throughout the state. Among them, Straub Brewery in St. Marys, the third oldest family owned brewery in the country, has forged a relationship with the farm, speaking for much of Brock's crop.

"With Straub in town, in the back of my head I thought, maybe if I can prove we can do it, that they would be interested," Brock said. "When I approached Straub about it they were extremely excited and said we'll take everything you've got."

Straub Brewery Brewmaster Vince Assetta says the brewery looks forward to the time when Brock's farm will be able to produce ingredients in quantities large enough to brew one large batch of seasonal beer. The beer will boast of all local ingredients and be a taste celebration of the late August hop harvest.

Last year, Brock harvested three pounds of hops and this year it has expanded to 25 pounds. To do a seasonal brew would take 600-700 pounds.

Working with the uncertainty of the

See Hops, A5

Songwriter's music video goes viral

More than 3 million view Mahaffey woman's song

By Elaine Haskins
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Annie Morgan, of Mahaffey, sat down on Monday to write a country song about something most everyone can relate to — losing someone they love.

Later the same night, she posted a video of her playing the piano while singing the song she just wrote, "If You Could See Me Fly," on her Facebook page.

Within a few hours, the video had 60-plus shares and about 40,000 views. As of Saturday afternoon, it was more than 3 million views and counting.

"I can't believe it. It's more than I expected," Morgan, 25, said about her song going viral. "I've touched people in England, Ireland, Scotland, Kenya, Canada, Australia, Nova



MORGAN

See Songwriter's, A8



Michaela Armanini and Loren Way portray Kim Kardashian and Kanye West during Friday's lip syncing assembly at DuBois Central Catholic High School. (Photo by Elaine Haskins)

DCC holds annual United Way Day

By Elaine Haskins
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DuBOIS — DuBois Central Catholic High School's Spirit Week concluded with Friday's United Way Day 2015.

The 37th Annual United Way Day raised more than \$1,000 for the organization, according to the Student Council of DCC.

For more than three decades, DCC's annual Spirit Week has ended with a United Way Day, a tradition begun in 1978. Raising funds for the local campaign has been an integral part of the event, said Student Council Advisor Kathleen Kunkle.

Student Council President Nick Sczcerba and Vice President Joey Varischetti determined the week-long slate of events. Other students involved in the planning were: Tessa Sayers, Jake Miknis, Michael Zafuto, Abbie Martini, Alexis Kosko, Meghan Graeca, Riley Meyers, Trisha Gupta and Mark Latuska.

Some of the 2015 theme days include Twins/Trip-lets Day, School Spirit Day and Americana.

Class themes for the yearly skits this year were based on national holidays: Sixth grade — New Year's; seventh grade — Valentine's

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