

Salem Lamplighter

Vol. 18 No. 6 December 2024



Merry
Christmas

SCA Annual Christmas Party
Tuesday, December 17
(third Tuesday)
7:00 p.m.
Salem Baptist Church

Food ❄ Games
Prizes ❄ FUN

Join your neighbors in good cheer!

Salem Civic Association Meetings

The next Civic Association meetings are **Tuesday, December 17** (party) and **Tuesday, January 28**. Meetings are held at Salem Baptist Church on Sinclair Road at 7:00 p.m. All residents are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Holiday Cheer & Community Spirit: SCA's Annual Festive Gathering!

Get ready for a night of warmth, fun, and community at the Salem Civic Association's Annual Holiday Bingo Pizza Party!

Mark Your Calendars:

Date: Tuesday, December 17

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Salem Baptist Church, 5862 Sinclair Rd

Calling all neighbors and community members! Join us for a delightful evening filled with:

- Delicious pizza & salad (Pizza House)
- Festive bingo with prizes for everyone!
- 2025 membership drive

What to Bring:

- Optional side dish or dessert to share
- Your holiday spirit!

Membership Rates for 2025:

- Individual: \$15
- Seniors 62+: \$10
- Business Membership: \$20

Whether you're a long-time member or considering your first SCA meeting, this is the perfect opportunity to connect with neighbors, enjoy some tasty food, and celebrate the holiday season together. Everyone is welcome!

Don't miss out on this wonderful community celebration. See you there!

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Salem Lamplighter

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Articles for the *Lamplighter* and Letters to the Editor are welcome and encouraged.

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Salem: A Year in Review

As we reflect on another vibrant year in Salem, it's a joy to celebrate the milestones and memories that brought our community closer together. This year was brimming with events and initiatives that showcased the heart and soul of our neighborhood.

The Salem Garden Collaborative

The Salem Garden Collaborative continued to flourish in 2024, bringing neighbors together to cultivate community gardens and foster sustainability. From spring planting sessions to the garden tour during the Block Party, this group has blossomed into a cornerstone of community engagement.

The Garden also celebrated a wonderful turnout at its **Second Annual Harvest Party**, hosted in collaboration with Salem Elementary School. The event brought neighbors together to enjoy the season's bounty, fostering even stronger connections within the community.

If you're interested in learning more about the Garden Collaborative, check out their Facebook page, *Salem Garden Collaborative*, for updates. You can also email Stephanie Wheeler at stephwheeler236@gmail.com to learn more about volunteering opportunities and the latest garden developments.

Second Annual Salem Harvest Block Party

The Second Annual Salem Harvest Block Party, held on September 15 at Salem Elementary School, was a tremendous success. Over three hundred neighbors came together to enjoy live music, raffle prizes, and family-friendly activities, thanks to the dedication of the Block Party Committee and generous sponsors like Silver Smiles Station, Luke's Auto, and 614 Exteriors.

Special thanks go to Principal Nikki Myers for opening the school grounds and to PTA volunteer Stephanie Pemberton for supporting the event. Highlights included a garden tour led by Charity Eilerman and various activities that showcased the spirit of connection and collaboration in Salem.

Civic Engagement and Leadership Updates

This year brought significant transitions in the Salem Civic Association (SCA), highlighting the strength and dedication of our community leaders.

We bid farewell to **Laurel Hobden**, who has served as Membership Officer with dedication and grace. We welcome **Renee Sammet** as her successor and are excited to see the energy and ideas she will bring to the role.

Additionally, **Andy Fields** joins the board as a first-time member in the position of Safety Officer. His passion for ensuring the well-being of our community is sure to be an asset.

While we bid farewell to **Allison Hibler**, who has greatly contributed to SCA's success as Treasurer, we celebrate her leadership in organizing **National Night Out** and the **Community Garage Sale**. Her efforts strengthened our sense of community, and we are excited to see **Rae Kirkbride** take on National Night Out and **Caitlin Elkins**, who led a successful **Easter Egg Hunt** at Chaseland Manor Park, step into new roles.

The **2025 Salem Civic Association Board** will include:

- **Jake Wheeler** President
- **Jeff Combs** Vice President
- **Charlene Combs** Secretary
- **TBA** Treasurer
- **Andy Fields** Safety Officer
- **Heather Odenweller** Communications Officer
- **Renee Sammet** Membership Officer
- **C. Doug Moody** Trustee (through 2025)
- **Pat Hammel** Trustee (through 2026)
- **Norma Sisson** Trustee (through 2027)

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on the successes of 2024, it's clear that Salem is a special place where neighbors come together to create something extraordinary. From bustling block parties to quiet moments in the community gardens, every gathering strengthens our bonds.

Let's carry this spirit into 2025 with more events, collaboration, and opportunities to make Salem an even better place to live. On behalf of the Salem Civic Association, thank you to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and resources to make this year one for the books.



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Neighborhood Public Service Announcement

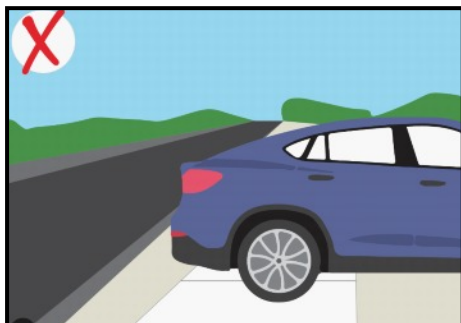
by Renee Sammet

Everyone has one. Some are long and thin, some are short and wide, some are old, some are new, some are used everyday, some are asphalt, some are concrete. Everyone in the neighborhood has a driveway on which they may park a vehicle. Some of us prefer to park on the street, and some of us try to squeeze all our vehicles in.

When I was first looking for homes, at the top of my list was off-street parking. The dangers of a sideswiped mirror or rogue scooter catapulting an unwilling rider into the quarter panel of my precious chariot were too real to me. Now as a parent, I am delighted to get to walk with my child and dogs down the sidewalks and feel safe while doing so. One thing I am noticing more frequently is that some people park their cars on the apron (the part that connects the driveway to the street) and block the sidewalk. I am lucky to be relatively agile and healthy and able to squeeze between the two vehicles or pop into the street occasionally as needed., but not all people are. We are fortunate to have sidewalks provided for pedestrian use in our neighborhood, not only for walkers and joggers, but also those who use walkers and wheelchairs, as well as young children just learning to ride their bikes or parents with infants in strollers. People should absolutely not have to walk into the street to get past a packed driveway. Those people would be well within their right to report a vehicle to the city and get that car ticketed because the Ohio Revised Code

4511.68 states
"No person shall stand or park any vehicle on a sidewalk."

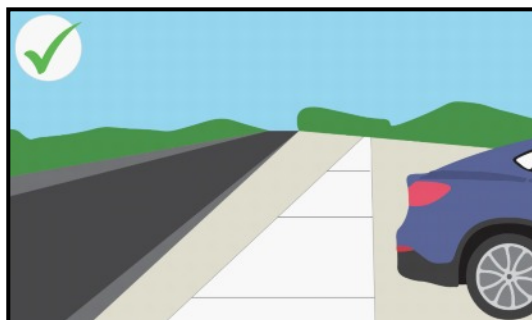
"But Renee," you say, "I have a lot of cars and precious little



space." To that I say, street parking is always an option, though in some areas you will need to make sure not to park in the "no parking" area, like on the south curve in front of Eden Springs apartments.

"But Renee, I am concerned about hooligans and speeding cars damaging my car if I park on the street." I don't have a good answer for that, but there is someone who might. His name is Dan Yandrich and he is our Columbus City Police Liaison assigned to Salem. He comes to our Salem Civic Association meetings the third Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. in Salem Baptist Church. You can voice your concerns and together as neighbors we can work out a solution. Become a member, come to the meetings, make changes in the neighborhood where you live. Meet your neighbors, support the causes that matter to you.

Be kind, be considerate. Don't block the sidewalk.



Editor's note: The following are other ticketable parking violations commonly seen in our neighborhood:

- Parking in front of a public or private driveway (even your own);
- within ten feet of a fire hydrant;
- within thirty feet of a stop sign;
- on any lawn, grass, or landscaped area (e.g., front yard or straddling the curb on the tree lawn);
- on a road with the vehicle facing in a direction other than the direction of travel on that side of the road.



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Curious Salem

by Grace Freeman

920 East Lincoln Avenue

A Salem resident asked about the house at 920 E. Lincoln Ave.

Q: *It looks different than most of the other houses in the area and there's a rumor it was part of the polo grounds that were in the area before Salem was developed.*

A: The house at 920 E Lincoln does look different than most of the other houses in the area! It is a bit older than much of the neighborhood, but not by much. Chaseland, the development that this part of Salem was part of, was platted in 1949, and this was one of the first houses built after that. The 1949 plat map shows the layout of the planned neighborhood, and the house isn't on the map at that time. The Franklin County Auditor shows a small dwelling on the site by 1950, and most of the rest of the neighborhood was developed throughout the 1950s and 60s. It's unclear if anyone lived in the home that early, however. City directories don't show anyone at the address until 1957, when the Louis Koch family is listed, though they had purchased the property in 1950 from developer James Sweeting. It seems likely they would have purchased the property after the home was built, rather than before, and the area may just not have been included in city directories yet, as it was a brand-new development. Either way, the neighborhood was platted before the house was built, meaning the polo grounds were gone by the time the house came to be.

Unfortunately, the story of the Koch family is a bit tragic. Louis and wife Georgia, married in Newark, Ohio in 1926, where Louis was from. They had one son, William "Billy" Eugene Koch, born soon afterwards, and the family lived in Newark before moving to Columbus. They purchased the home on Lincoln in 1950, and Billy continued to live with them. Billy had run-ins with the law throughout his

life, first in 1947 when he spent a year at the state penitentiary in Virginia for grand larceny, and additional stints in prison in Washington, D.C., the Mansfield, Ohio reformatory, and the Ohio Penitentiary in the 1950s for burglaries and forgery. It would later be learned that there were additional crimes in other states.

Louis Koch died in 1958 and Billy remained in the home with his mother. He married, had children, and remarried over the years.

In 1965, Billy was arrested in Covington, Kentucky, for the murders of three Linden residents, Robert Herron, Herron's sister Ena/Ina Malfe, and Malfe's 11-year-old daughter, Tamara. Each had been shot in the head and an anonymous caller from Covington told Columbus police that a man was "bragging about killing three persons." Detectives visited the home and found the victims, determining that Herron had been shot while sleeping on a living room sofa, and mother and daughter had been sexually assaulted. Money was taken from Mrs. Malfe's purse, and it was learned that Herron and Koch had spent time together in prison. Covington police, assisted by Columbus authorities, found Koch in Kentucky, with several weapons.

Billy's pregnant wife defended her husband, indicating that all was normal and there was no way he had committed these crimes. As she told it: he had taken his mother to work the morning after the murders, taken his children to get haircuts, and all seemed normal. He then received a phone call and told his wife he unexpectedly needed to go to Kentucky. He left, taking little clothing or money with him. Koch went to Covington, to the home of another former inmate he knew from his time in prison, who called police that night after Koch



allegedly admitted to the killings.

Ballistics tests showed that one of three guns found with Koch was used in the murders, but Koch claimed to be innocent. He pleaded as such when he was charged with first degree murder days later in Columbus. By now, Koch was a father of four, with his family on Lincoln Avenue. He and his wife had married one week after he was arrested in a different case, accused of fraud and writing bad checks.

In the trial, the story as it had been related by Jack Heise, the former inmate Koch was staying with in Kentucky, was described as follows:

Heise, who was staying in Covington but had been living on Roche Dr. (in Salem) until recently, testified that Koch admitted to the murders. He claimed that Herron owed Koch money, and Koch went to collect. After drinking, they argued, and when Herron pulled out a gun, Koch instead shot him. Heise stated that the mother and daughter had come downstairs and witnessed the incident and had to be quieted. Heise claimed Koch made the appearance of sexual assault and robbery only to confuse investigators. Another witness, a woman named Mary Jane Henson, also of Covington, Kentucky, also stated that Koch admitted to the shootings.

Koch received court-appointed defense counsel and was indicted, and the death penalty was sought. A jury of nine women and three men was seated,

Alleged Trio Slayer Is Caught in Kentucky

Vandalism Is Blasted By Mayor

Warns Housewives Care Is Necessary In Opening Doors

Two separate crimes rankled Mayor Sensenbrenner Saturday. The mayor was particularly



TAMMY MALFE



WILLIAM GENE KOCH



ROBERT HERRON

Unknown Caller Aids Authorities

By JAY GIBIAN and DAVID LORE

The accused killer of three Linden residents was arrested early Saturday in a Covington, Ky., rooming house by Covington police.

Columbus officers returned the suspect, William Gene

■ Courtesy Columbus Dispatch, July 3, 1965

and the defense admitted that Koch visited the home on July 1, but not July 2. The bodies were discovered on July 2. They admitted that Koch knew the victims, and both Herron and Koch were out on bond for other crimes at the time. They also admitted that Koch had taken eleven-year-old victim Tammy Malfe and other local children swimming that day, but returned her home and never came back. Koch was then allegedly called to Kentucky by Mr. Heise, and did not have the gun from the murder in his possession at any time, and was not guilty.

It was learned in the course of the trial that the apartment at which Koch was arrested and Heise had been staying, was Miss Henson's. It was also learned that Jack Heise, formerly of Roche Dr., had three felony convictions and had known Koch since 1951. They met in the Franklin County jail. Heise repeated his story of Koch's admission to the murders and noted that he only knew of the victims' names and address from seeing the credit cards Koch had stolen after the murders. Heise also claimed that the credit cards had been cut up and flushed down the toilet.

Police corroborated that Heise had called, which led to them traveling to Kentucky, where Heise took a gun from a box in a car trunk and declaring it to be the murder weapon belonging to Koch, he gave it to police. The other two guns and ammunition were with Koch in the apartment. Koch claimed to have already been in Kentucky when the murders occurred.

Look for the conclusion of *Curious Salem: 920 E. Lincoln Ave. in the next issue of the Salem Lamplighter (February 2025).*

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■ Columbus Dispatch advertisement for 920 E. Lincoln Ave. dated April 19, 1967 after Koch's trial.



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Why Becoming a Member of (or Donating to) the Salem Civic Association Matters

Just \$15 a year—or \$10 for seniors (62+)—can help make a difference!

Becoming a member of the Salem Civic Association—or simply making a donation—isn't just about financial support; it's about improving our neighborhood and making Salem an even better place to live.

What does the civic association do?

We're your collective voice

- Advocate for safer streets, improved parks, and better neighborhood resources.
- Speak directly to City Council, the mayor, police, and schools on behalf of our community.

We create opportunities to connect

- Share ideas, resolve conflicts, and celebrate diversity.
- Build relationships with neighbors to foster a stronger community.

We host events and initiatives

Your membership makes these possible:

- *Lamplighter* Newsletter
- Salem Block Party
- National Night Out
- Community Garage Sale
- Thanksgiving dinners for families in need
- Feral Cat Fund (sheltering, feeding, spaying, and neutering neighborhood cats)

Why membership matters

Without active members, our civic association—and the collective voice it provides—ceases to exist. Your membership ensures we have the resources, structure, and voice to improve Salem.

Monthly Meetings:

Join us every fourth Tuesday of the month (third Tuesday in December) to stay informed, share your ideas, and shape our community's future.



Membership Options

- Residents: \$15/year
- Seniors (62+): \$10/year
- Business Owners: \$20/year

For business owners

Own a business? Become a Business Member for only \$20/year!

- Support your community while promoting your business to neighbors.
- Show your commitment to Salem's growth and success.

How to join or donate

Membership is easy and affordable!

- Mail a check: Use the form on the back of this newsletter.
- Online option: Visit salem-civic-association.org

Why join?

Salem is a gem in our city, and its success starts with us. Whether you're a resident, senior, or business owner, your membership supports initiatives that make our community cleaner, safer, and more connected.

Salem isn't just where we live—it's our home. Let's work together to make it the best it can be!



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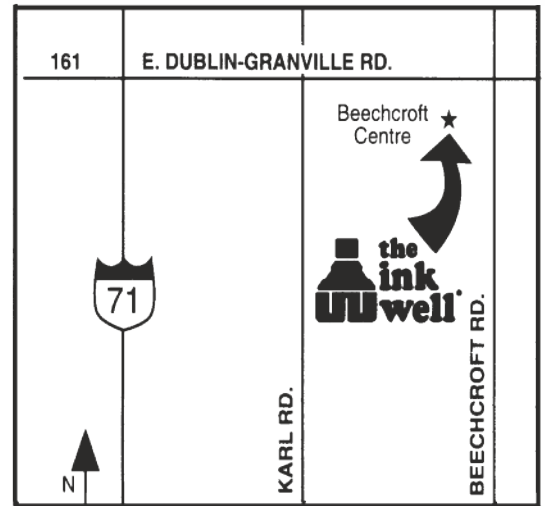
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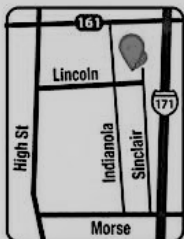
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MEMBERSHIP FORM

SALEM CIVIC ASSOCIATION



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Email

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OR SCAN QR CODE TO JOIN ONLINE



TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

\$15 Individual \$10 Senior 62+ \$20 Business/Organization

ADDITIONAL DONATION

Our Civic Association relies heavily on community donations to support operational expenses and local initiatives. Kindly specify the amount you wish to additionally donate. *Thank You!*

Feral Cat Program Food Bank *Lampighter* Newsletter

Neighborhood Events: Annual Garage Sale, Block Party, National Night Out

Operating Costs Thanksgiving Dinners

VOLUNTEER IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Annual Garage Sale Block Party National Night Out

Term & Condition

Membership is per individual.

More Info

SalemCivicAssn@gmail.com

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