

After 76 years local hardware shop closes doors

Shelby Reeves
Chillicothe Gazette
USA TODAY NETWORK

CHILLICOTHE — After 76 years of providing the community with quality lumber, tools and more the Eastern Avenue Lumber Co. will soon be closing its doors.

Chelsea Chenault currently runs the family store which was started in 1947 by her grandparents. Since the beginning the store has been passed down through the generations. Chenault has many memories in the store practically



The Eastern Avenue Lumber Co. will be shutting down in October after over 70 years in the community. *SHELBY REEVES/CHILLICOTHE GAZETTE*

growing up in it with her family.

"I have been coming to this place basically since I was born," said Chenault. She has many memories of the business but her favorites take place at the Christmas party where everyone was able to get together, have fun and relax while celebrating.

While she will miss the store and the memories Chelsea said the closing ultimately came after she and her husband, Casey, received an offer on the land that they could not turn down.

The Chenaults want to thank all of their loyal customers who have been a part of the business since the beginning

supporting her and her family. She said over the years she has built a connection with many regulars and considers them her friends who she will miss very much.

To clear out stock the store started a liquidation sale on Aug. 1 that will continue to run until the official closing date of the business which is Oct. 27. The Chenaults say they are trying to sell everything in the store before the last day.

Shelby Reeves is a reporter for the Chillicothe Gazette. You can email her at SReeves@gannett.com or follow her on Twitter @Shelby_Reeves.

Mares Cares celebrates 10 years

Shelby Reeves
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USA TODAY NETWORK

CHILLICOTHE — For the last 10 years Mares Cares Counseling has provided thousands of hours of care to adults and children in the community. To celebrate a decade of helping others the business recently held a ribbon cutting.

What started out as one person wanting to do good and help those in the community has grown to an entire team of around 30 people working together to create a great environment for those coming in. Child and family therapist Patricia Mares said she has felt this growth has been organic and natural.

"We have an incredible staff," said Mares.

She said every day she and her husband, Alvin, an adult and couples therapist, are able to get up and help the community. They are both very proud of how the business has grown. Alvin said the goal for the business is to continue helping people and growing so that it is bigger than them and is sustainable for the next generation.



The team at Mares Cares celebrated the business' 10th anniversary on August 3, 2023 with a ribbon cutting in front of one of their locations in Chillicothe. *SHELBY REEVES/CHILLICOTHE GAZETTE*

Bobbi Kellogg from the Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce attended the celebration, she said it was hard to believe that Mares Cares had already been

around for 10 years and that they were a great supporter of the community.

To learn more about Mares Cares and all the services offered visit their website.

Shelby Reeves is a reporter for the Chillicothe Gazette. You can email her at SReeves@gannett.com or follow her on Twitter @Shelby_Reeves.

Study: Seven in 10 parents said their child struggled last school year

Sheridan Hendrix
Columbus Dispatch
USA TODAY NETWORK

Back-to-school nervousness is normal for many students, but this year more parents might be experiencing them as well.

A new national survey conducted by the Harris Poll on behalf of Nationwide Children's Hospital's On Our Sleeves Movement for Children's Mental Health reports that seven out of 10 parents surveyed said their children experienced challenges during the last school year.

Parents said the biggest issues their children faced included safety concerns (37%), academic challenges (26%), bullying (24%), ongoing social challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic (24%) and mental health challenges (22%).

The results closely matched what parents anticipated when asked the same question prior to the start of last school year, said Dr. Whitney Raglin Bignall, associate clinical director of On Our Sleeves and a pediatric psychologist at Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Raglin Bignall said she wasn't surprised by the responses. Childhood mental health issues have been on the rise for more than a decade, she said.

A study by the Health Resources and

Services Administration found that the number of children ages 3 to 17 diagnosed with depression grew by 27% between 2016 and 2020. The share of high school students who reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness increased from 26% to 37% from 2009 to 2019, according to the National Institute of Health.

Suicidal behaviors among high school students also increased 44% during the decade prior to the pandemic. Between 2007 and 2018, suicide rates among 10- to 24-year-olds in the U.S. increased 57%. At least 6,600 people in this age group died by suicide in 2020, according to the NIH.

Raglin Bignall said the long tail of the pandemic has played a major role in these challenges, from the abrupt switch to online learning and learning loss to isolation and lost years of social development.

"Many people thought that kids would go back to normal, but we see that they are still behind," she said.

The pandemic isn't the only thing to blame though. Our "technology-focused society" has also been a factor, Raglin Bignall said. Reliance on screens for interaction, she said, has negatively impacted young people's feelings of social belonging and connectedness. That, on top of these other factors, can make it hard for students to get to know one another face-

to-face, play, talk to new people and speak up in class.

As families head into this new school year, Raglin Bignall said the best way to address these worries is to start the conversation now.

"Kids don't always know how to talk about what they're feeling, so we see it in outbursts and behavioral issues," Raglin Bignall said. "But it's crucial to understand how kids are thinking and feeling about returning to the classroom."

Raglin Bignall suggests checking in by starting a simple conversation.

A question as simple as "How are you feeling about going back to school?" can help minimize any lingering issues before

they turn into even bigger challenges this upcoming school year, she said.

On Our Sleeves also developed a back-to-school conversation starters guide for parents and caregivers, which is available for free online. Raglin Bignall also recommends teachers and coaches using the conversation starters and parents being in communication with adults in their kids' lives.

"Having families work together to understand the child's challenges and develop goals for the new year can help set kids up for a more successful academic year," Raglin Bignall said.

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