



## **(Gar)Field Notes ~ December 2025**

*From Executive Director Tim Garfield*

### **What a year it has been for The Garfield Trail!**

After a very quiet first six weeks, we participated in **Presidents' Day** at JAGNHS on February 17<sup>th</sup> ~ always a very busy fun day!

Then, at the invitation of the Hiram Historical Society, we had a table display and a presence at **The Garfield Flag Exhibit** from February 20<sup>th</sup> - 22<sup>nd</sup>. This event was held in Kennedy Center on the Hiram College campus and included many artifacts and memorabilia related to James A. Garfield from the college archives, historical society, and from the collection of Dr. E. Ronald Wright. An honor guard from American Legion Post #193 in Mantua stood watch during display hours. On the final day, we sponsored a presentation by author and

historian C. W. Goodyear ([President Garfield: From Radical to Unifier](#)).

On March 5<sup>th</sup>, we participated in **Statehood Day** in Columbus, OH. The Ohio History Connection featured Ohio's canals with our exhibit highlighting the Garfield family's role. We established contacts with other groups, such as the CanalWay Center and the Ohio & Erie Canalway Association.

March 6<sup>th</sup> began our 2025 **"Discovering Garfield Series"** with a lecture by Dave Lintern about the Garfield family in the Solon, OH community. Bob and Mary Shimits and Solon Historical Society hosted 47 guests!

April 21<sup>st</sup> gave us **Easter Monday Egg Roll** at JAGNHS. The rain held out just long enough!

Our second **"Discovering Garfield"** event occurred on May 18<sup>th</sup> when Karen Lakus led a group of 17 on a hike along the canal, beginning at Bacci Park in Cuyahoga Heights, OH. Once again, the Garfield family's link to the Ohio & Erie Canal and its construction was underscored.

June 13<sup>th</sup> found us with an audience of 45 at a special historical site: Western Reserve Academy's Chapel in Hudson, OH. C. W. Goodyear spoke about James Garfield and education at this third installment of the **"Discovering Garfield Series."** Charlie remained in town to appear at Hiram College's Alumni Weekend event, where our previous lucky weather conditions did not cooperate!

The Trail's 3rd **Annual Friend Raiser** at Sharon James Cellars drew 91 people! It was an evening of excellent autumn weather, a glorious assortment of raffle baskets, and generous donations ~ all accompanied by the delicious food, wine, and hospitality of the SJC catering team. It's possible we have outgrown that venue unless we only sell a limited number of tickets in 2026!

The final **"Discovering Garfield"** talk took place in historic Clark Hall on the campus of Case Western Reserve University. Dr. John Grabowski, noted Cleveland historian and professor, delivered information about James A. Garfield's sons and northeast Ohio's Progressive Era. 18 attended, including several Garfield family members, Mrs. Allan Peskin, and a few people new to the series.

While not the last of our events, but perhaps the biggest, in cooperation with Hiram College we presented a special pre-screening of the first episode of **“Death by Lightning”** – the **Netflix series** based on Candice Millard’s book, *Destiny of the Republic, a Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President*, written and directed by Mike Makowski. This was our biggest event, with almost 500 folks attending the viewing in Hayden Auditorium, followed by a brief panel discussion with Mike Makowski, Candice Millard, Todd Arrington, and myself, with moderator Dr. James Thompson of Hiram College. We ended the evening with a reception in Kennedy Center immediately after the screening. Amazingly, the power in Hiram Village went out as everyone moved from the auditorium to the reception, but almost 300 people stayed in the dark for the reception and Candice, to her credit, signed books (sold by **The Village Bookstore** in Garrettsville) for an hour and a half by the light of cell phone flashlights! It was an amazing evening, we saw a great dramatic representation of Candice’s book, which while not entirely historically correct, told the story of James A. Garfield’s surprising nomination and election to the Presidency of the United States and ultimately his tragic death at the hands of Charles Guiteau, aided by the doctors who attempted to save him. If you haven’t seen it and have Netflix available to you, I urge you to watch the series! All in all, one very busy, but successful year!



As we head into 2026, our **Trail PowerPoint Presentation (“James A. Garfield: Cradle to Grave in Northeast Ohio”)** is going **“on the road”** to area organizations, which we hope will expand our footprint and raise the number of followers we have - currently at 400 and counting. Scheduled so far: February 5<sup>th</sup> – Summit Rotary; February 12<sup>th</sup> – Twinsburg Historical Society; March 19<sup>th</sup> – Kirtland Kiwanis. Details to follow.

We are also trying to track down current generations of James’ and Lucretia’s family. We have a pretty good count through the great-great-great-grandchildren’s generation and I personally know we are up to the 3- and 4-greats just here locally. So, if you are a descendant, please contact me at [garfieldtrailohio@gmail.com](mailto:garfieldtrailohio@gmail.com) to help fill in the next levels of our family tree!

- *Tim Garfield*

***Other Notes of Interest:***

- ❖ The Trail is donating **\$1,000.00** to West Geauga Kiwanis in Chesterland, OH in support of their efforts to acquire an Ohio Historical Marker at the site of the Geauga Seminary, the school that James A. Garfield and Lucretia Rudolph attended ~ and where they first met.
- ❖ **Save the Date: Wednesday, February 25, 2026 ~ 6:30 p.m., “Preacher, Principal, President”** (*Details – Page 3*)

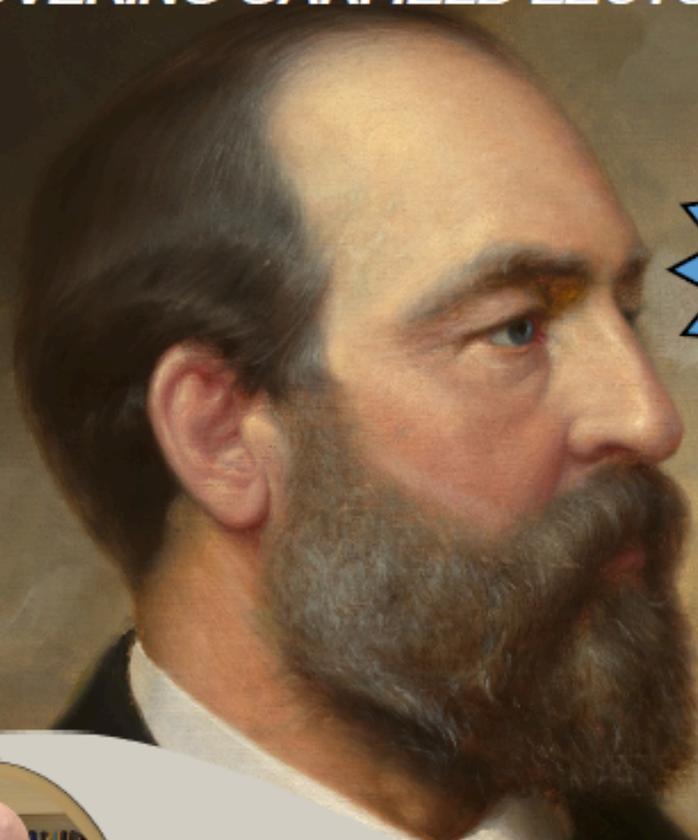


***Wishing you good health and happiness!***



The Garfield Trail of Ohio

## **DISCOVERING GARFIELD LECTURE SERIES**



Scan Me



To RSVP for Events



James Thompson

Professor, Political Science  
Director, J.A. Garfield Center  
For Public Leadership

Garfield : Preacher, Principal, President  
Presented by James Thompson, Ph.D.

**Wednesday, February 25, 2026—6:30 p.m.**

Koritansky Hall—Hiram College Campus  
Garfield & Wakefield Rds., Hiram 44234

***Please RSVP: [www.garfieldtrail.org/event-list](http://www.garfieldtrail.org/event-list)***