

## **Press Release: Paige Smith and Attorney Shirley J. Smith Generously Donate Historic Downtown Properties to East Palestine's Future**

**Date: November 24, 2025**

**When Attorney Shirley J. Smith, a 1985 East Palestine High School graduate and daughter of the late Ronald and Della Smith, transferred ownership of the buildings at 90-94 N. Market Street—her former law office and the site of the village's beloved former Chinese restaurant—to her daughter Paige, a simple but profound question arose: What should be done with these properties?**

**For Paige, the answer became clear: give them back to the community that had given her so much.**

**A 2025 graduate of Hathaway Brown School in Shaker Heights, Paige earned Academic High Honors, was inducted into the National Honor Society and the Pi Delta Mathematics Society, and actively led civic and charitable organizations during her time there. This fall she began her studies at the University of Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, double-majoring in Finance and Chinese while maintaining a perfect 4.0 GPA and continuing her tradition of community involvement.**

**Notre Dame's motto—"What would you fight for?"—struck a deep chord. For Paige, the answer was unmistakable: the small town she calls "the Big City." The place where she visited her mom's law office, got her hair cut at Aunt Kay's Kuttin' Korral, ate unlimited ice cream courtesy of second cousin Brad Hogue (who always made sure she left with a box of Dilly Bars), marveled at the Christmas parade from the East Palestine Fire Department's ladder truck, and somehow won the five-pound chocolate bunny almost every year at the Rotary Easter Egg Hunt.**

**After the 2023 train derailment devastated East Palestine's residents, businesses, and spirit, Paige saw the empty storefronts on Market Street and the park transformed into a construction zone during her visits home. Rather than manage the properties from afar while attending college out of state, she chose a far more generous path.**

**With guidance from Village Manager Antonio Diaz-Guy, Paige proudly donated both buildings to the East Palestine Community Improvement Corporation (CIC). This selfless gift—made possible by her mother Shirley's equally generous decision to pass the properties to Paige without reservation—ensures they will remain in community hands for generations to come.**

Under the CIC's stewardship, 90-94 N. Market Street will now receive necessary improvements and renovations to bring them up to code, with a clear priority on returning them to active, productive use as quickly as possible. These downtown cornerstones will once again contribute to the heartbeat of East Palestine.

Progress on older buildings can sometimes move slowly—permits, funding, and construction all take time—but doing it right is always worth the wait. Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Shirley J. Smith and her daughter Paige, two pieces of East Palestine's past now have a bright and promising future.

Paige continues to live out Notre Dame's challenge: fighting for faith, family, country, and her hometown. And, of course, the Irish—Go Notre Dame!