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from  
*Adams County*

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

February 22, 2019

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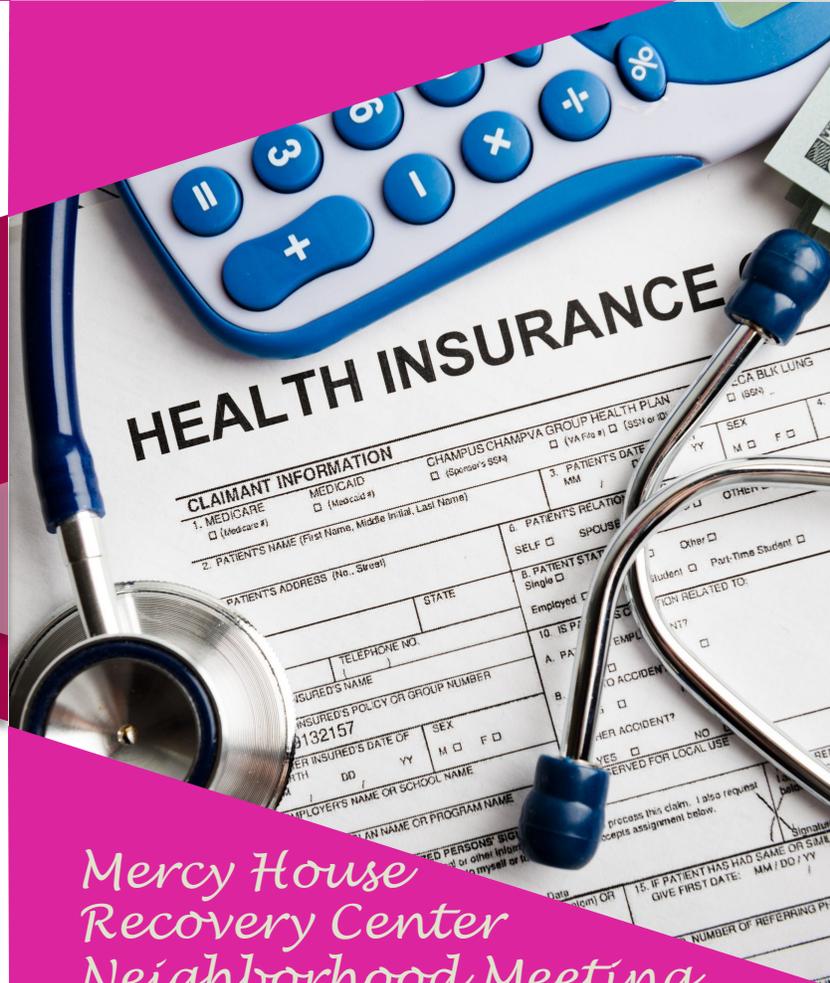
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## *Mercy House Recovery Center Neighborhood Meeting*

On Tuesday, February 12, the commissioners held a neighborhood informational meeting at the Prince of Peace community room regarding the Mercy House Recovery Center project. Five neighbors attended as did four members of Gettysburg Borough Council. The tenor of those attending was very positive and the information provided answered numerous questions. It was reinforced to the group that Mercy House Recovery Center will be a very structured living environment, with clients being accepted only after a thorough screening interview, and that residents will be required to hold down a 40 hour per week day shift job, attend mandatory counseling sessions in the evening at the center, and adhere to a 10PM curfew. The residents sign an agreement to follow the policies and any deviation leads to immediate expulsion from the program. Besides administrative and counseling staff there will



be a 24/7 live-in resident supervisor. Computer tracked door swipes, cameras, and monitored ingress/egress will also enhance security. The center will be administered by the RASE Project which is short for Recovery, Advocacy, Service & Empowerment. The RASE Project has experienced better than average success in running several similar centers in Central Pennsylvania. The commissioners have visited the RASE live-in center in downtown Lancaster which is a block from the Lancaster County courthouse. Seeing with our own eyes how the center operated in a former residence similar to Mercy House relieved some of our initial concerns.

Besides the need and primary benefit of providing recovery services for our residents, this historic and currently abandoned county owned building is slated to be renovated largely with grant funding through Adams County's Health/MHIDD Joinder with York County. Adams County will still own the building and collect rent from the RASE Project, and the historical integrity of the building will be preserved. Generally, the only changes in the historic exterior footprint will be the addition of new historically appropriate windows and an elevator shaft in the rear.

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## Court Hearings at Human Services Building

On some days when you go by the new Adams County Human Services Building the parking seems like it is already 3/4 full. Looking back it's a good thing the parking was expanded during construction! As planned and anticipated, a number of Court Hearings have transitioned to the Adams County Human Services Building. MDJ Beauchat has been there for the past year, Central Court moved out there in November as did Juvenile Court, Dependency Court and Domestic Relations Court. MDJ Harvey relocated from E. Middle Street to HSB on January 3. The HSB has built in technology and digital recording of proceedings that has been phased in, initially with a court reporter to make sure there were no gaps in a complete record. This process has now progressed to court hearings being conducted fully with digital coverage without court reporters which results in savings. Both the public and staff seem extremely pleased with the facilities and especially the free ample parking. Public transportation is available to the complex 4 times a day Tuesday - Friday via the Freedom Transit Blue Line.

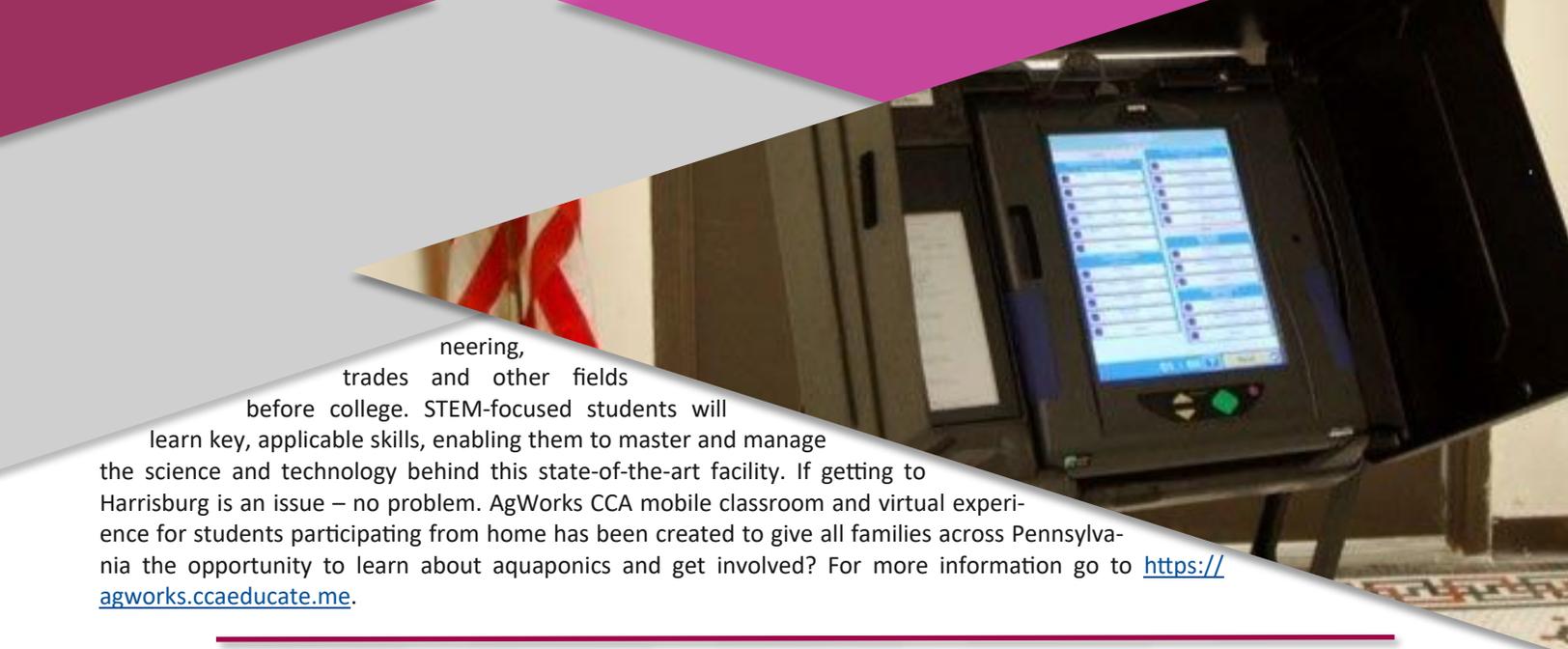
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## AGWorks Apprenticeship Opportunities

As the need to provide training for those that would like to enter the field of agriculture increases, Adams County Rural Resource Specialist Mark Clowney has recently informed us of a new and unique intern + training opportunity for those Adams County students interested in a career in agriculture. AgWorks at Commonwealth Charter Academy in Harrisburg, is a brand-new, fully functional, interactive state-of-the-art controlled environment agriculture facility, housed in the Capital Campus and Family Service Center in Harrisburg. AgWorks at CCA is an agriculturally focused educational and career-building offering for students at CCA, a Pennsylvania public cyber school serving grades K through 12.

AgWorks at CCA is the largest public educational aquaponics facility in the country, using state-of-the-art technology to create a controlled environment agriculture that provides learning experiences for students of all ages. This hands-on, student-led facility enables students to learn about aquaponics, hydroponics, aeroponics and a variety of career options. Controlled environment agriculture uses technology to produce food. Crops are grown in an enclosed structure, monitored by technology and agricultural specialists, to protect and maintain the best growing conditions. AgWorks at CCA provides students the opportunity to receive hands-on experiences and learn more about careers in agriculture, business, engi-





neering,  
trades and other fields  
before college. STEM-focused students will  
learn key, applicable skills, enabling them to master and manage  
the science and technology behind this state-of-the-art facility. If getting to  
Harrisburg is an issue – no problem. AgWorks CCA mobile classroom and virtual experi-  
ence for students participating from home has been created to give all families across Pennsylv-  
ania the opportunity to learn about aquaponics and get involved? For more information go to [https://  
agworks.ccaeducate.me](https://agworks.ccaeducate.me).

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## State to Fund Increased Portion of Voting Machines

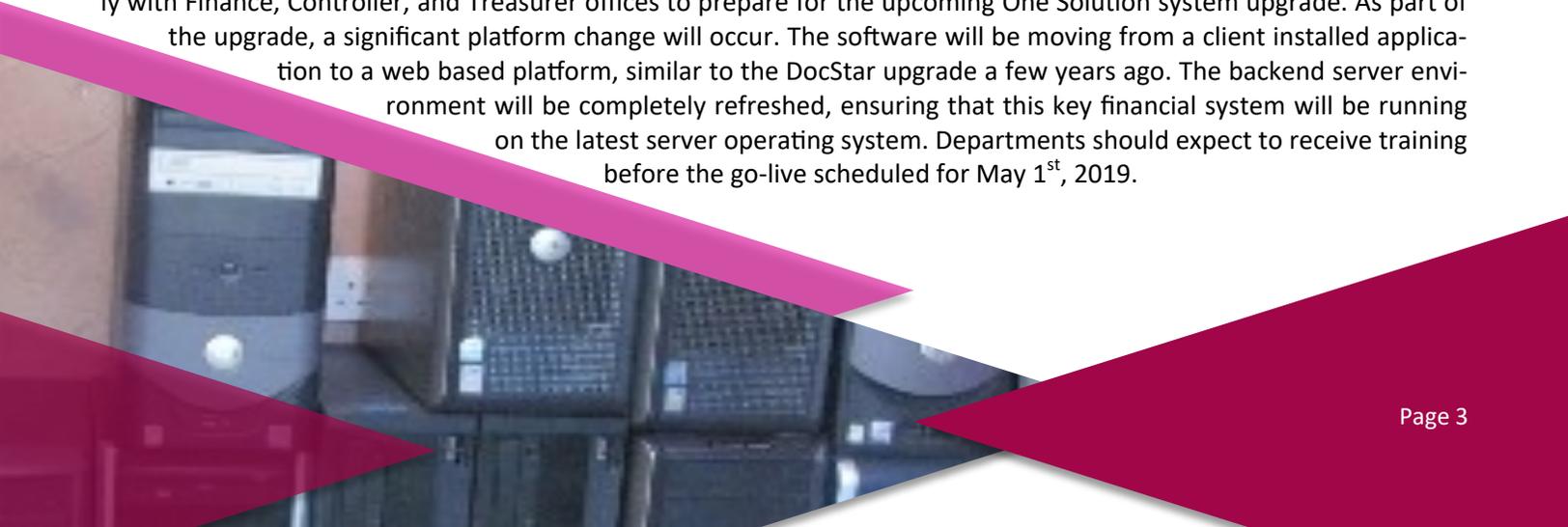
As part of his FY 2019-2020 budget proposal, Gov. Wolf included \$15 million within the Department of State for grants to counties for new election systems, as the first year of a five-year long funding plan that would total \$75 million. This follows the administrations last year settlement with the Stein Presidential Campaign. At the same time the agreement was announced, Gov. Wolf's administration indicated its intention to seek state funding for at least 50% of the cost of the new systems, which the administration anticipates it will require a state outlay of about \$75 million. The federal government is slated to kick in 12%

Pennsylvania counties have little choice but to comply with the terms of the settlement since the Department of State has informed counties all current machines will be de-certified in the near future. Our Adams County Elections Office & the Elections Board is currently in the process of vetting several vendors and viewing on-site demonstrations. We would like to have the new machines up and running for the May Primary to gain that experience before the next Presidential election in 2020 - but are still uncertain whether that time frame is realistic. We will need to make that decision in early March.

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## Information Technology Update

The Information Technology Department started the year off with the first phase of the bi-annual computer refresh project. As part of the IT strategic plan, all equipment that resides on the County network will be replaced that is 6 years or older. This ensures that departments are equipped with up-to-date technology that is both secure and reliable. Considering the rapid advancements in technology, the 6 year refresh rate ensures the County received the full useful life of the technology, but also recognizes the importance of keeping the equipment functioning at a high level. All departments are considered as part of this upgrade process. In addition, the IT department has been working closely with Finance, Controller, and Treasurer offices to prepare for the upcoming One Solution system upgrade. As part of the upgrade, a significant platform change will occur. The software will be moving from a client installed application to a web based platform, similar to the DocStar upgrade a few years ago. The backend server environment will be completely refreshed, ensuring that this key financial system will be running on the latest server operating system. Departments should expect to receive training before the go-live scheduled for May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.



# Farmland Preservation

We are very pleased to report that the PA Department of Farmland Preservation released their 2019 Allocation of Funds Report to the participating Counties throughout the State. Adams will receive a total of \$770,292 from the State and adding that to the County Appropriation the Agricultural Land Preservation Board will have \$1,155,856 to preserve farmland throughout Adams County. This equates to a 2:1 match on our County funds! These funds will preserve approximately 500 acres of our farmland and orchards throughout the County which will help to sustain one of the top industries in Adams County - Agriculture!

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## Staff Snow Tubing a Huge Success

About 150 Adams County staff and their families spent last evening snow tubing together at Liberty Mountain in Fairfield. HR Director Michelle Miller reported that the weather was great, lanes were slick and there were smiles everywhere. There is no doubt that wellness is more than blood tests and doctor visits. Exercise, fun and social interaction all contribute to our well-being.

Hats off to HR staff for making this event happen. This event was put together on relatively short notice and the turn-out was amazing. HR is already planning the event again in the future. I was not able to make it last evening;



*The* **End**

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From 6" of snow on Wednesday to 53 degrees yesterday was like having Winter and Spring all in 24 hours. With forecast temperatures, I don't think this snow will be around very long. One thing for sure the excess moisture we have been experiencing for the last year does not seem to be going away? I can't recall the last drought with brown yards and water bans that we used to have years ago. Makes you wonder if its climate change or just Mother Nature's natural cycle?

I am not a frequent movie attendee, but I have seen some really good movies lately based on factual stories or history. Put *The Greenbook*, *VICE*, *The Upside*, *The Mule* and *Thou Shall Not Grow Old* on your list of movies that are not only entertaining - but also impart some knowledge and history. *Thou Shall Not Grow Old* is more of a unique WWI documentary made exclusively with original WWI footage that has been enhanced and colorized using archived film and actual remembrances of veterans, to tell their stories of conflict on the Western Front. I should warn you that the trench warfare footage including the effects of mustard gas is very graphic. I think it is a fact that most Americans are not well versed on WWI. The movie shows the actual end of the conflict on the front lines on the eleventh hour, of the eleventh day, of the eleventh month in 1918 – giving us Armistice Day.

Tomorrow and next Saturday morning head to Strawberry Hill Nature Center in Fairfield for their annual *Maple Madness*. Eat a great pancake breakfast, go on a tour and watch maple syrup being made. To reserve a tour spot call the nature center at 717-642-5840. Also on Saturday at 11:00 join other Chowderheads at Herr Tavern for their *Annual Chowderfest!* Be the judge of delicious chowders made by local restaurants. Help the chefs win bragging rights! A \$10 donation at the door gets you a tasting spoon, voting ballot and tickets to taste chowder and some local craft brews (Must be 21 for tickets). All proceeds benefit the Gettysburg Soup Kitchen. *Abolitionist Day* will be commemorated in Gettysburg on Saturday, March 2 at 2:00. Among the local abolitionists to be featured will be a tableau of the people who gathered in 1836 at the home of James McAllister to form the Adams County Anti-Slavery Society. The McAllisters operated a mill on site that later became part of the Underground Railroad. This event is free and open to the public. It will be held in the Charles Sterner Recreational Building at the Gettysburg Recreation Park.

There's sure a lot to do in Adams County. No matter what you do, get out there and experience all the wonderful historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!