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from
Adams County

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Mercy House Recovery Center

The Adams County Commissioners will be announcing a groundbreaking ceremony for the *Mercy House Recovery Center* on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 11:00 am. This is certainly a significant event for our community resulting from extreme need, vision, collaboration, coordination and generosity. County staff and local officials are invited to attend the groundbreaking in coordination with their Directors and staffing logistics. With the successful re-bidding of the General Contractor portion, renovation is expected to start by the end of January. Gettysburg Construction is the general contractor, Hulls Electric Service is electrical contractor, Franz Plumbing is the plumbing contractor and Rodney B. Smith HVAC contractor. The community has generously rallied around the project which is largely funded by grants and donations; but grants and donations are still needed and being pursued by the Board.



Courthouse Arson Attempt

As most everyone is aware by now, there was an attack on the Adams County Courthouse during the night of December 22 when a Molotov cocktail was tossed through the Clerk of Courts window from Legion Alley. Fortunately, the device did not ignite or make entry into the interior of the building. The building alarm resulted in quick response by Gettysburg & Cumberland Twp. PD. After extensive investigation, as reported in local media, the individual was identified and taken into custody last week in Gettysburg. A number of related charges including attempted arson have been filed.

This incident certainly drives home the fact that county facilities and staff are not immune to attack or acts of violence. The Adams County Board of Commissioners would like to recognize and thank Gettysburg Borough PD and Cumberland Township PD for their quick response that evening. We would also like to thank Gettysburg PD, the Adams County District Attorney's Office, Adams County Detectives and other agencies who assisted in this multi-agency investigation. The fact that no major damage or injury occurred was a blessing. This incident reinforces the fact that in the business of county government we all need to be vigilant and aware of our surroundings and daily contacts at all times.

Thank You Tom Clowney & Tim Brown

Preserving our local history, agrarian heritage and beautiful vistas is an important part of who we are in Adams County. On Wednesday evening the commissioners had the privilege of recognizing two individuals who have been part of that process for many years. Tom Clowney and Tim Brown were founding members of the Adams County Agricultural Land Preservation Board and have served on the Board for all 30 years. Besides being iconic Adams County farmers, they have committed a large chunk of their adult life to promoting and facilitating agriculture and agricultural preservation in Adams County. At the Annual Re-organization meeting of the Ag Land Preservation Board, hosted by Rural Resources Manager Ellen Dayhoff, Commissioners Randy Phiel & Jim Martin presented 30-year recognition plaques from the Board to Tom Clowney & Tim Brown. Tim was not able to attend to accept his plaque, which will be presented at later date. Both Tom Clowney and Tim Brown are gentleman and community servants who exemplify some of the best attributes of our community!

IT Update

The Information Technology Department recently finalized the *2020 IT Strategic Plan*. The initial plan, drafted in 2013, defines the IT departments strategy, focus points, challenges, and progress over the last 7 years. The 2020 plan will continue the same trend as years prior to provide insight for County and Court departments to better understand the priorities of the IT department. In addition to the general strategic plan, the department published the first formalized cyber security strategic plan. Cyber security has been identified as the number one objective of the department and will be the primary focus for many years to come. This includes both the protection of sensitive data and limiting negative business impact to deliver public services. Through a commitment towards organizational-wide improvement, all departments will benefit as technological modernization efforts take place in the years to come. Each strategic plan can be found on the County



intranet under
the IT customer service portal.

Through a joint effort between the Commissioners, Solicitor, and CIO in-person reviews of County departments will take place throughout 2020. The purpose of the meetings will be to review business, technological, records management, and HIPAA practices in each individual office. The objective of this effort will be to build stronger relationships, strategically plan priorities, educate, and reduce risk to the County. With a commitment from departments to engage and take an honest look at current practices, more efficient ways of doing things will emerge. Through continuous improvement efforts over time, the organization will progress in a variety of areas related to the delivery of public services.

Human Resources Update

HR is happy to report to you that county staff will receive their W-2's in the mail by the end of the month - if not sooner. In *Wellness News* there will be a *Wellness Challenge* for the month of February. HR reports there will be a variety of activities and challenges to choose from. All of them will be based on February being National Heart Month. Details will be posted on the ADP Portal. Please make a habit of checking the portal at least once a week. Snow tubing at Liberty Mountain was a big hit last year and HR hopes to be able to offer it again! They will be watching for a brisk, cold, snow covered trail night in February! Again, watch the portal for details as this activity cannot be planned too far in advance as it is weather dependent! Our HR Department is always there for you to provide employee assistance in many different ways. Do not hesitate to take advantage of this valuable organizational resource when needed.

Senior Management Meeting

Please plan to attend the Senior Management meeting today at 1:30 PM in the HSB Meeting Room. This is a critical kick-off meeting for two County-wide IT/Legal initiatives that will touch all County Departments in 2020 and moving forward. The Board of Commissioners has prioritized these two County-wide initiatives for 2020 including a Global HIPAA Privacy Policy. The Adams County HIPAA Policy is being drafted and is anticipated to go into effect in the second quarter of 2020. Directors will be charged with mastery and enforcement of the Departmental Working Rules that are put into place for your department to safe-guard PHI and other sensitive data. At this afternoon's meeting an overview of the HIPAA policy and the County procedures being developed will be presented. This presentation will be interactive, and your questions and suggestions are encouraged.

The second County-wide initiative includes Document Retention/Document Destruction protocols that are being introduced by the IT/Solicitor team in late January. This team will make its way around to speak individually with each Director/Department Head to discuss your Department's specific needs and obligations under the Pennsylvania Museum Commission Rules(County) and the AOPC Guidelines (Courts). For instance, documents will no longer be scanned into Docstar without a destruction date – we all need to understand what we need to do to keep our IT system healthy and secure as we move forward. Please plan to come to the meeting with your questions and consider inviting your super-user, as these are both tech-intensive topics.

2020 Census is Here

All 3 commissioners participated in a *Census 101 Information Session* on Thursday morning with other community officials. The session was provided by the Philadelphia Regional Census Center. The U.S. Constitution mandates that everyone in the country be counted every 10 years. Interestingly, the first census was in 1790. The data is utilized in a multitude of ways; but the most obvious reasons are distribution of \$675 billion in federal funds and support to states, counties and communities; congressional re-districting for fair representation and providing information for community leaders to make planning decisions.

For the first time you will be able to respond to the ten questions on-line - or by phone or mail. If there is no response from the household by those methods, then a census worker will try and personally contact you. You will be asked questions like age, sex, and the number of people living in the household. You will never be asked for Social Security information, bank or credit card information, questions about money or donations, or anything related to political parties. By statute the responses are protected by Federal Law and can only be used to produce statistics. They cannot be given or used against you in any way by the government - including the FBI, CIA, DHS or ICE.

We were told at the meeting that the Census Bureau is looking for over 600 Census takers in our community and that they currently have less than half of that amount. You must be 18 and speak English. The job pays \$16.50 per hour and can be part-time with flexible hours as a primary or part-time job. You can apply by visiting 2020census.gov/jobs and completing the on-line application. You may also call 1-855-562-2020. Stand up and be counted. You will be benefiting your community!



The End

On Wednesday, Commissioner Jim Martin, Senior Rural Resources Planner Mark Clowney and I braved the morning weather and headed to the Pennsylvania Farm Show for Public Officials' day. Besides Adams County's own Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding, the four luncheon speakers were especially interesting and engaging as they described their unique and innovative methodologies of promoting agriculture opportunities in Pennsylvania. One dairy farm in Latrobe added a creamery with ice cream and cheese along with student education and public visitation. They bought the 180-acre farm from Arnold Palmer. Another in Elk County restored fallow farmland with wildflower growing and production, promoting tourism with beautiful vistas and then opening a distillery. What began as a "food rescue" operation in Pittsburgh to get quick spoiling excess food products from restaurants to food pantries, with volunteer drivers called Food Heroes, is growing in other areas of Pennsylvania and across the nation. The fourth was the principal of a failing elementary school in northwest Philadelphia that developed an agriculture-based curriculum in association with a nearby farm - and is now seeing scholastic and enrollment success. Before heading home, we had a chance to check out some Adams County products on display and chat with Secretary Redding. We naturally walked out with a milk shake in-hand.

The Farm Show runs through this weekend and with temperatures forecasted in the 60's my guess is attendance will be brisk. Willy Wonka begins a run at the Gettysburg Community Theater this evening. It is a delight for the young and the young at heart. Dancing With The Stars returns to the Majestic Theater on Friday January 17. I have my ticket to see local folks that we all know strutting their stuff after practicing for several months. The event supports two worthy community organizations - the Adams County Arts Council and YWCA. Just saying - dinner and Dancing With The Stars makes for a great evening out.

After spending a career with the National Park Service, I can attest to the fact that the Park takes on a special and beautiful winter effect after a snowfall, whether you are driving, walking or cross-country skiing in the Park or Soldiers National Cemetery. The cemetery is even more impacting with the SGT MAC Wreaths. No matter what you do get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities that Adams County has to offer!