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from
Adams County

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

November 13, 2020

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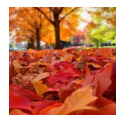
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HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

VETERANS DAY

Veterans Day Recognition

Veterans Day Letter to the Editor 2020

On this Veterans Day, I would like to ask the citizens of Adams County to stop and reflect on our County's approximately 8,800 Veterans. Whether they served in WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Bosnia, Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom, anywhere in the Middle East or Southwest Asia and anytime or place in between – this is their day. As well it should be. Each and every one of them, at some point in time, wrote a check payable to the United States of America for any amount up to and including their life. Their service and sacrifice, as well as that of those who went before them, are what has preserved our way of life and allowed us the freedoms and liberties we so dearly cherish. Please also especially remember our Disabled Veterans. It is they who have given more of themselves than should have been asked, but they did. Last, but not least, please remember and thank the families of our Veterans. They are often the unsung Patriots who



stayed at home taking care of their families without the help of the Veteran. All of these great Americans deserve our thanks, our help and our support. So on this special day, please make it a point to acknowledge and thank our Veterans and their families. They have given us much and asked for very little in return. Our gratitude and respect are a small price to pay in return.

Stan Clark, Director
Adams County Veterans Affairs

Election Recap

The intensity and uniqueness of this election began last spring with the introduction of “no excuse needed” mail-in ballots in Pennsylvania, and continued to ramp up with a passionate presidential campaign that invoked strong opinions and emotions nationwide. The addition of COVID last February also played a challenging role in election administration for counties. With a vast number of mail-in ballots anticipated, legislation to allow processing ballots prior to election day became a fumbled political football in Harrisburg. Despite the County Commissioner Association of Pennsylvania, and its 67 counties’, pleading for the ability to open envelopes and flatten the ballots for the scanner, under secure and watched conditions, the legislature and the administration could not come to agreement. Thus, counties were left with beginning to count and process this large volume of mail-ins on election day. Combined with a significant amount of planning from Adams County administration and elections staff, 30 county staff, working two shifts, and employing three processing lines, the activity began on November 3rd at 7AM - and concluded on Wednesday, November 4 at noon. The majority of post-election canvass/certification began on Friday, November 6 and concluded on Monday, November 9.

A heavy voter turn-out was expected. Adams County turn-out reached record proportions at 77.63%. Of Adams County’s 72,388 registered voters, 56, 919 voted in some manner. There were 19,073 mail-in ballots and 607 provisional ballots recorded. Despite additional staffing, increased training, more voting booths and re-balancing of some precincts, there were still substantial lines in the morning at several polls. It seemed that voters were anxious to cast their vote early, and most of the lines eased in the afternoon. The fact that Adams County has a majority of registered Republicans may also explain the heavy turn-out at the polls.

Acting as the Adams County Board of Elections, during Tuesday’s election Commissioners Martin & Qually supervised the counting of mail-in votes in the Jury Assembly Room, while I visited polls throughout Adams County from opening until close. In reflection, I could not have been prouder of Adams County staff, poll workers, constables, and the conduct of our residents. At the end of the day, there were no significant incidents or even minor acts of intimidation. Even with some long line’s, folks were very patient, civil and respectful. This was an election that we will remember for a long time. This election personified that democracy is not always easy or free of controversy and differences of opinion.

We are a government of laws, intertwined with fundamental rights and freedoms, as well as checks and balances, that will long persevere when this election becomes a more faded memory!





Benefits Open Enrollment

Another reminder that benefit open enrollment for 2021 will begin November 16 and end on December 4. Adams County medical, vision, prescription and dental will remain with our current providers (Capital Blue Cross and Sunlife). Voluntary plans (LTD, Life & AD&D, Accident and Critical Illness) are changing to Sunlife Financial. Grandfathered plans will no longer be available. You will have the option to self-pay Colonial Life for your Accident and Critical Illness plans if you choose to keep those plans. The plan descriptions for these new plans will be available on the ADP portal soon. For more information please contact Danette Laughman in HR.

Finance Dept Earns 202 GOFA Award

One of the most necessary, important, and strategic tasks for county government that we tackle every year, is analyzing, building and creating a realistic budget. The Adams County annual budget is approximately \$70M. For the second year in a row, the Adams County Finance Department has been awarded the *Distinguished Budget Presentation Award* from the Government Officials Finance Association.

To qualify for consideration of this award requires a detailed and comprehensive document that Finance compiles each year to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines. Although the award comes with a very nice letter and plaque that is proudly displayed in the Finance Department, the real value is to continually analyze and improve fiscal operations for Adams County Government. Congratulations Melissa, Phil, Sara and Todd !

WellSpan Addresses COVID Spike / Holiday Message

WellSpan Health is stressing the need for renewed safety efforts in slowing the spread of COVID-19, as hospitalization rates increase at each of the health system's acute care hospitals with some experiencing their highest patient counts of the pandemic. The number of patients being treated for COVID-19 as of midday Wednesday stood at 181. That is more than triple the number of WellSpan patients hospitalized back in April and a significant increase from just last month.

"COVID-19 has challenged our health system in many ways, and through it all the resolve of our 20,000 employees remains strong," said Roxanna L. Gapstur, Ph.D., R.N., president and CEO of WellSpan Health. "Our team is dedicated to fighting this virus as we continue to reimagine the way we deliver care for our community." WellSpan has increased its use of technology and telemedicine options to care for patients and help slow the spread of the virus. WellSpan has also leaned into logistics, launching a patient placement center to connect operations at all its hospitals. This hub streamlines the process for hospitals to share resources.

While the

preparations have ensured WellSpan has had enough equipment to keep team members and patients safe, its leaders say now, more than ever, the community needs to continue to help slow the spread of the virus. Continued rise of positive cases could put a large stress on resources and capacity at regional health facilities. "With positive cases on the rise headed into the holidays, we're concerned that family gatherings and other traditions could continue to contribute to the growing trend," said Anthony Aquilina D.O., executive vice president and chief physician executive at WellSpan Health. "It's important we each take the time to practice safe, healthy behaviors. A little goes a long way."

WellSpan will be delivering holiday safety messages in the form of Public Service Announcements throughout the holiday season to remind community members of ways they can reduce the spread of COVID, including these simple recommendations:

- Limit gathering sizes – even small gatherings carry big risk.
- Avoid eating or drinking in groups.
- Follow masking and social distancing guidelines.
- Wash your hands and use hand sanitizer frequently.

For the latest WellSpan information related to COVID-19 including a data dashboard for each WellSpan hospital and county statistics updated daily, visit www.WellSpan.org/Coronavirus.



The End

I hope that you have taken advantage of this record-breaking Indian Summer weather and enjoyed the extended outdoor opportunities in Adams County. Whether you have been mowing grass, cleaning out those flower boxes, taking a walk in the crunch of fallen leaves or taken advantage of outdoor dining opportunities, it is hard to imagine that our first snowfall could be less than a month away.

This Saturday head for the Hauser Hill Event Center for the music by the *Kirk Wise Duo*. Doors open at 6pm and drinks will be available for purchase by Halbrecht Winery & Battlefield Brew Works/Spirits of Gettysburg. No outside drinks are allowed - but you are invited to bring your own food. Admission is \$10 with music for your enjoyment until 10PM.

Celebrate *95 years of Majestic Movies* beginning on November 21 & 22 with Singin' In the Rain (1952). Tickets are limited to 100 patrons per showing and cost \$8.50. Advance ticket purchase is highly recommended. Other movie classics will follow on subsequent weekends. The Majestic Theater - what a great place to see a classic movie!

On Saturday, November 21st, The Gettysburg Foundation presents the *Annual Remembrance Day Illumination* in the Gettysburg Soldiers' National Cemetery (weather permitting). The commemoration features a luminary candle on all 3,512 Civil War soldiers' graves. The fallen soldiers' names are read throughout the evening. Guests may enter the Cemetery from 5:30 - 9:00 through the gate at Taneytown Road or the gate at Baltimore Street. This non-ticketed event is free of charge and open to the public. The event is free; although the Foundation does suggest a donation for the Remembrance Day Illumination by sponsoring a candle in honor or memory of a loved one. A candle sponsorship is \$18.63. To sponsor a candle or request illumination volunteer information contact byingling@gettysburgfoundation.org or call 717-339-2148.

No matter what you do, get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!