

Written by: *Commissioner Randy Phiel*

# T.G.I.F.

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## CCAP Summer Conference

*The County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania* Summer Conference was held in Lake Harmony the first week of August. Harlan Shober of Washington County was elected organization President and Dennis Stuckey of Lancaster 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Franklin County Commissioner Bob Thomas completed his term as CCAP President and now becomes Board Chairman. I am happy to report that I was re-elected as CCAP Board Representative from Region 3 which is comprised Adams County and nine counties to our west. Commissioner Martin serves on the CCAP Insurance Board which supplies a variety of insurance to many Pennsylvania counties - including Adams County. These positions put our Board in a better position to serve our constituents.

For counties, one of the greatest challenges facing our corrections systems is the fast-growing population of inmates with mental illness and untreated or undertreated substance abuse issues. Building on several years' of priority work, CCAP members created a Comprehensive Behavioral Health Task Force to study causes, consider best practices, provide education for counties, identify barriers and ultimately develop a plan and recommendations. I believe the committee has done an outstanding job. The Task Force's final report was released at the CCAP Summer Conference, and both the full report and the executive summary are available at [www.pacounties.org](http://www.pacounties.org) by clicking Legislative Action Center under the Government Relations tab.

# PRE-CONSTRUCTION MEETING

Yesterday we had the first pre-construction meeting for the Human Services Building renovation. All four primary contractors and the engineers were in attendance. The four primary contractors are ECI General Contractor, Hulls Electric, Carl Frantz Plumbing and Fairfield for HVAC. Yesterday primary discussion points were contracts, building access, construction schedule, background checks and change orders. As he was looking at me, the architect informed the contractors that if even the Board Chairman told them to change or move something – they were not allowed to do it and get paid - unless it went through him. 😊

It has been perceived and scheduled that the project is being fast tracked to have Phase I completed by December 31. The goal is to have Children & Youth and Probation in their new quarters by the end of the year. It is anticipated that interior demolition will begin around the end of this month. It looks like financing will be very favorable. After several years of visioning, I believe we are all anxious to get this very significant project underway. I will keep you regularly updated on the process.

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## *Adams County is . . .*

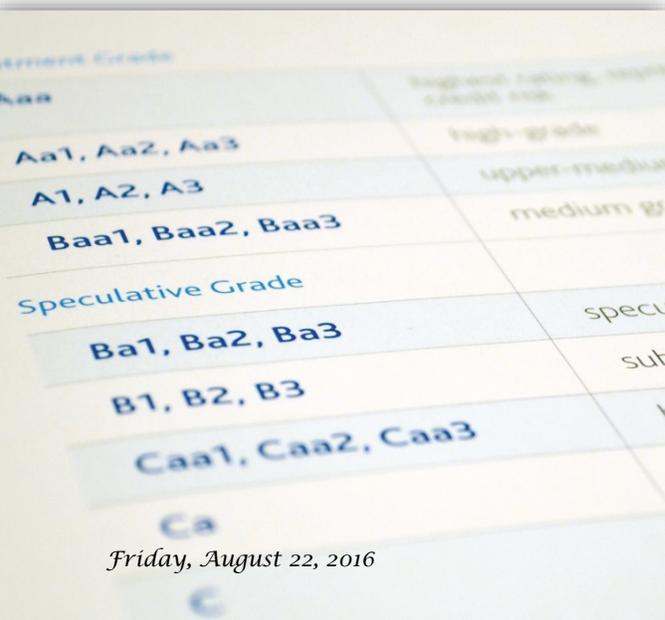
### **Consistently Striving To Upgrade Bond Rating**

This week a conference call from Moody's rating agency was held with the county manager. The purpose of the call was to determine the viability of county finances, the local economy and the perspective of the future for the County of Adams. Others participating in the call were the Susquehanna Group Financial Advisors and the underwriter PNC.

The call dealt with the facts that Adams County is financially healthy, with a strong fund balance, an effective budget and strong prospect for growth in the Adams county economy. Strong performance by business in the county like the Clark's distribution center, repurposing the Schindler building, strong tourism numbers that are a result of Destination Gettysburg's marketing efforts, new retail centers being built through-out the county, a strong stable fruit industry that adds so much to the local economy and new housing starts that are building out the developments already approved.

The call also highlighted the accomplishments of the County over the last three years, and the initiative to consolidate services to be more efficient and responsive to the needs of the county residents. Emphasizing the planning of utilizing rental dollars to cover the debt service (mortgage) for a county owned building; thus providing a stable budgetary factor verses escalating rent or out growing the lease space.

Although we currently have a very good bond rating, the objective is to obtain an increase in the rating from the Aa3 rating to either an Aa2 or better yet an Aa1 rating. Each rating provides a savings of at least 15 basis points (there are 100 basis points in one percent of interest). We our cognizant of our consistent obligation to increase Adams County's financial rating if possible. We are encouraged by the positive nature of this week's phone conference and are anxious to hear the outcome in the next two weeks.



# Law Enforcement Firearms Training Range Fundraising Kick-Off

Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 17. The *Adams County Law Enforcement "Adams County Blue Needs You" Firearms Training Range Fundraising Kick-Off*, will be held from 1-9PM at the Battlefield Harley Pavilion. There will be food, a chicken BBQ, fireworks, music, service dogs, bomb robots, displays and demonstrations of equipment. The Game PA Commission and Boat Commission will both have displays. There will be a vehicle display of all law enforcement agencies in Adams County. This event will commence fundraising for this long overdue facility, that is being planned strategically beside our emergency management facility.

Permitting for the range is almost complete. CS Davidson has provided initial engineering as a donation and is providing additional engineering at cost. The range is being built without use of taxpayer dollars for construction. The range will be strictly limited to law enforcement training.

We anticipate significant support from the community with monetary and in-kind donations. Most local ranges are point-and-shoot ranges. Beside point-and-shoot, this range will be geared specifically for various types of law enforcement scenarios that may confront county law enforcement in our world today. Beside a range storage building and an open pavilion, there also will be a memorial flag plaza for ceremonies and to recognize donors. You may contact range fundraising co-chairman Jim Mueller or Randy Phiel, or Honorary Chair Rich Alloway for information or to donate.



## Adams County Veterans Affairs Update

The Adams county Veterans Affairs Department is proud to announce, for the fiscal year ending June 2016, more compensation dollars were generated for our County Veterans than in any previous year. Director Stan Clark commented that although this is something for which we should be proud, it is not the only standard by which the department should and can be judged. Stan says the Veterans Affairs Department is involved in many other activities such as maintaining burial records, ordering grave markers, ordering and coordinating the placement of American Flags on all Veterans graves in the County each Memorial Day, maintaining an open and direct dialogue with all County Veterans Organizations, assisting Veterans in applying for VA health care benefits, dealing with referrals to other VA and local agencies, as well as many other duties. If you know any Veteran who has not talked to our VA Department, please urge them to give our Veterans Affairs office a call.

We are very happy to welcome Victor Woerner onboard to work with Stan as a Veterans Service Officer. Vic will be attending the VA Service Officer Accreditation Course next month and will become fully accredited to perform all of the duties of our VA office. Vic is a retired Pennsylvania State Police Trooper and many of you have met him previously as a member of our Courthouse Security Team. Vic is a United States Navy Veteran and has already jumped right into his position with energy and enthusiasm. We are certain that Vic will make an excellent addition to our VA Department. With Vic's addition we will be able to do more outreach to our County Veterans and make them more aware of the services we provide; while assisting them in applying for and receiving those benefits. The addition will also enable the VA staff to attend more events and functions to provide information and let our Veterans know that they have local representatives to assist them in whatever way they can.

Welcome Aboard Vic!

Don't forget the *Land Conservancy Picnic* this Sunday from 2-5 at the Tim Shields Farm on Pumping Station/Cunningham Road. Tim has done a wonderful job of restoration. I am anxious to see it first-hand. Speaking of the Land Conservancy, the annual and always popular LCAC Road Rally on Saturday, October 15 is rapidly approaching. This year's theme honors Adams County First Responders, so John Eline and I have been enlisted to assist with route planning and activities. John and I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of showing off Adams County Emergency Services. John will deservedly be this year's Road Rally Master! To sign up your team or to be an event sponsor call the LCAC at 717-334-2828.

All three Commissioners participated in the Littlestown Good Ole Days Parade last evening. It was a great community event.

The Lutheran Seminary Brewfest kicks off tomorrow. That means I normally have a full porch of friends. It's a fun day. No matter what you do this weekend, get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!



*"...get out there and experience all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!"*

# The End