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from
Adams County

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

September 15, 2023

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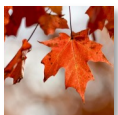
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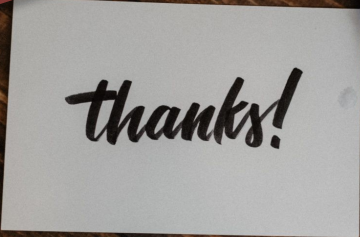
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Remembering September 11th, 2001

This week marked the 22nd anniversary of one of the darkest days in American history. We must never forget that day! I believe we all remember where we were and what we were doing when the news consumed us that day. We should also not forget the events of that day created an overwhelming display of national unity in the following months and years. Unfortunately, that national unity in more recent times seems to have been forgotten! It is disappointing it takes a catastrophic event or war to bring us together as a nation. I hope it does not take another national tragedy or catastrophic event for us to ultimately re-embrace a sense of national unity!

In terms of national unity, this morning's *POW-MIA Gold Star Families Remembrance Ceremony* at Evergreen Cemetery is an event that should make us all pause and reflect from a common platform, remembering those that gave their service and last full measure to our country. The program begins at 9AM with a moment of silence, 3-volley salute, sounding of Taps and a display of the 3-man missing table. The public is invited to attend.



thanks!

County Staff Picnic and Staff Appreciation

The County of Adams will be recognizing our employees all next week with some special events during Employee Appreciation Week. We are proud of the dedication and professionalism displayed by these folks and want to remind them how much we appreciate their efforts. Please refer to the County email from HR for all the fun details.

I hope you are looking forward to next Friday gathering with your Adams County colleagues and friends for our annual staff picnic. I know I am! The picnic will take place at the Adams County Ag Center on Old Harrisburg Road from 11:30 -2:30 - so all shifts can attend. The lunch menu is hamburgers, hot dogs, pork BBQ, and grilled chicken breast with sides. There will be a drawing for prizes – so don't forget to add your name to the prize box. Also, please remember to bring a donation for Bag the Bounty for Adams County needy families. The Commissioners are looking forward to Serving You!

Adams County Community Foundation Needs Volunteers

Adams County's Annual Day of Giving, otherwise known as the Adams County Community Foundation Giving Spree, can at last return to an in-person event held at Gettysburg Area Middle School. With the in-person format, volunteers are needed! The Foundation is looking for at least a 2-hour commitment, or longer if you are available. If you have not attended the event previously, it is a fun and uplifting event, as thousands of donors come to learn about and support the missions of a hundred county nonprofits. There are seated jobs, active jobs, indoors and out. Volunteers are needed before, during and after the November 9 event.

For more information go to ACCFGivingSpree.org or give Lisa Donahoe a call 717-337-0060 or email Lisa at lisa@adamscountycf.org

Sachs Bridge Painting Completed

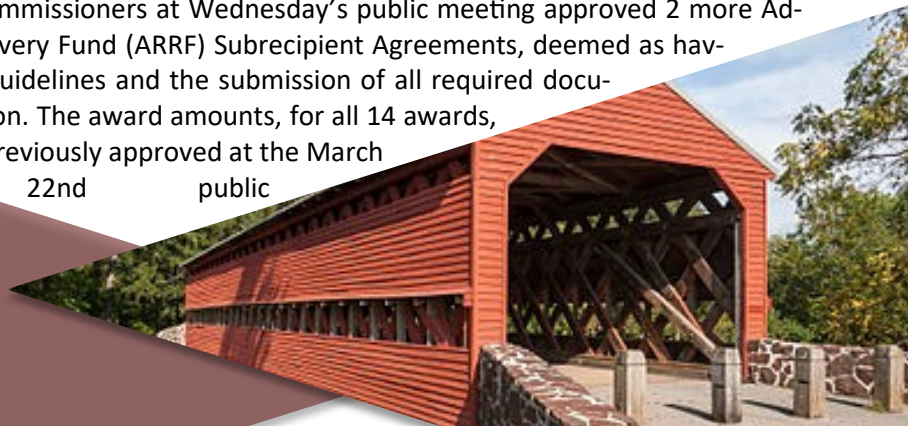
Back in June, the Board approved a request for the iconic Sachs Mill Covered Bridge to get a fresh coat of paint on the outside - and fire-retardant material applied to the interior. We are happy to report the work has now been completed by the non-profit Theodore Burr Covered Bridge Society at no cost to Adams County.

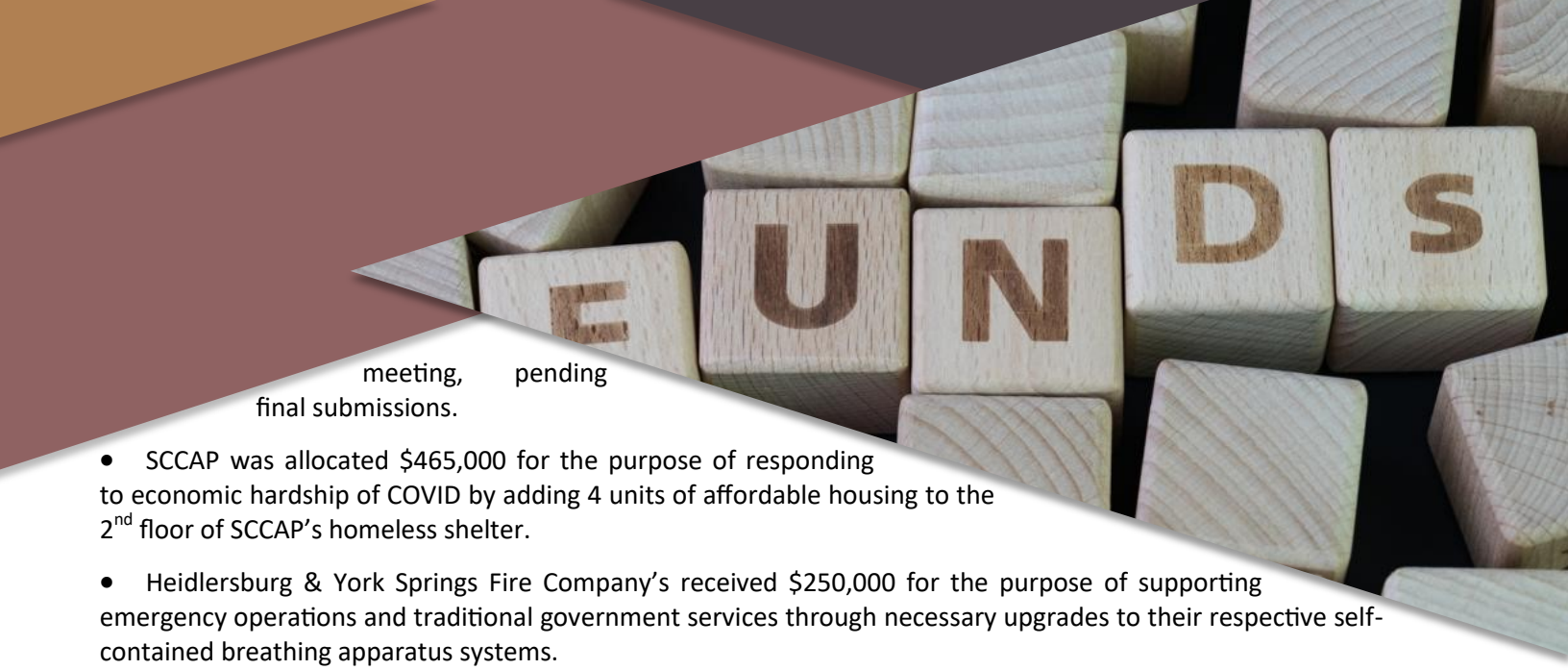
The society is dedicated to the preservation of covered bridges. They chose the Sachs Mill bridge due to its unique history. The Union army crossed on their way to Gettysburg and the Confederate Army crossed it four times during and after the battle. This is the first covered bridge the Society has worked on for 3-years since COVID. The cost of the project was estimated to be between \$8,000-\$10,000. There once were 49 covered bridges in Adams County, and now there are only two public bridges including Sachs Mill. The other is the Jack's Mountain Bridge west of Fairfield which still carries one way traffic. In the state of Pennsylvania, we are left with 209 covered bridges from a one-time total of 1500.

Sachs Mill Bridge is one of my favorite views in Adams County! The perfect image of the bridge in the reflective water on a clear day is breath-taking!

ARRF Grants Gain Final Approval

The Adams County Board of Commissioners at Wednesday's public meeting approved 2 more Adams Response & Recovery Fund (ARRF) Subrecipient Agreements, deemed as having met all guidelines and the submission of all required documentation. The award amounts, for all 14 awards, were previously approved at the March 22nd public





meeting, pending
final submissions.

- SCCAP was allocated \$465,000 for the purpose of responding to economic hardship of COVID by adding 4 units of affordable housing to the 2nd floor of SCCAP’s homeless shelter.
- Heidlersburg & York Springs Fire Company’s received \$250,000 for the purpose of supporting emergency operations and traditional government services through necessary upgrades to their respective self-contained breathing apparatus systems.

Pennsylvania’s 911 Funding Dilemma

Adams County is proud to provide one of the key functions in public safety—the operation of the 911 call-taking and dispatch system. As technologies continue to evolve, and funding streams no longer align with current realities, counties need to be able to rely on consistent and sustainable funding to maintain their responsibility as the first line of emergency response. To that end, counties support development of a funding mechanism well ahead of the January 31, 2024, sunset of the state’s 911 statute, that adequately supports current county needs and also ensures that funding sources and distribution support needs into the future.

Counties support continued strategic planning and investment for evolving technologies and GIS data to ensure NG911 is properly supported and maintained. To this end, counties are calling for an increase in the 911 surcharge to \$2.30 with \$0.15 increase until the next reauthorization (five years). Since the 911 surcharge is the only dedicated source of statewide funding for 911, funding that adequately supports the growing needs of this critical emergency response system, will need to be found elsewhere. Without an increase to the surcharge, counties would need to fund any remaining costs through their General Funds. Since the only source of General Fund revenue is property tax dollars, this likely would actualize as an increase in property tax rates for Pennsylvanians. By increasing the surcharge, it creates a predictable fee Pennsylvanians can anticipate each month on their phone bill for the specific and dedicated purpose of providing 911 services.

The Pennsylvania County Commissioners Association supports an increase in the phone surcharge to \$2.30 with \$0.15 increase until the next reauthorization (five years). Currently, counties are funding 34% of the system through property taxes. With this proposed surcharge rate, counties will continue to provide a level of “buy-in” to the system (approx. 10-15%) without relying on regular property tax increases to cover the county share. A flat annual increase provides certainty to counties and other stakeholders over the course of the authorization. A five-year reauthorization allows for time to better understand and determine if a surcharge is still an appropriate funding mechanism as technologies and capabilities evolve.

Counties’ costs for 911 service continue to outpace 911 surcharge collection. Revenues from the current fee have remained relatively flat, so counties are again picking up more and more of the cost of the 911 system. What this means for taxpayers is that a phone subscriber will pay an additional \$57 dollars total over the five-year period (currently \$19.80 annually, up to \$33 annually by 2027). An increase to \$2.30 with a \$0.15 increase annually for five years amounts to \$156 for five years of surcharges for a regular cellphone subscriber. We need to act now: A one year delay at current funding levels would bump counties to funding nearly 38% of the system. Over time, if current fee remains in place, that number will jump to 46% in 2027. This means the potential for property tax increases to cover the increasing county share of 911 costs.

Call it what you want, but funding for critical 911 services will come from either phone users or increased property taxes. A small fee to phone users seems to be the lesser of two evils! Let your state legislators know that as public officials we have no greater responsibility than the health, safety, and welfare of our residents and first responders!



IT Update

The Information Technology Department has scheduled a five-day cybersecurity analysis with the PA National Guard at zero cost to the County. As part of this effort, County IT will sit alongside the National Guard cyber specialists as they run real-time controlled cyberattacks against the County network. The results from this will be used to improve both short-term and long-term security posture. Additionally, results from the PA National Guard engagement will enhance work already underway with the County's existing cybersecurity partner. Cybersecurity will continue to be prioritized within the IT department to reduce overall risk to the organization.

September's Community Organization Proclamations

- Library Card Sign-Up Month - September 2023
- Hispanic Heritage Month - September 15 to October 15 2023
- Adams County Heritage Festival Day, Gettysburg Rec Park, Sunday, September 17
- Suicide Prevention Awareness Month – September 2023
- Hunger Action Month – September 2023



The End

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- *Adams County Annual Heritage Festival*, 12-4, this Sunday at Gettysburg Rec Park. Ethnic food, music and non-profit booths.
 - *2023 WWII Weekend at Eisenhower National Historic Site*. Guest speakers, living historians, and partner organizations bring the stories of 1943 to life for this 3-day event September 15-17. Free on-site parking weather permitting.
 - *The SpongeBob Musical*, Gettysburg Community Theater, Friday, Saturday, Sunday 7 & 2PM. Online \$15 or \$20 at door.
 - *5TH Annual Fall Festival Creekside Farm & Market*, East Berlin. Café, pumpkin patch, corn maze, hayrides, pumpkin carving, cookie decorating, bakery items, face painting, kid's games and more. Opens 11AM each day.
 - *HGAC Historic Barn Tour*. Saturday 10-AM – 4PM. Adults \$35/40 and kids free. Tour starts at Historic Round Barn.
 - *Eisenhower In Gettysburg* with historian Tim Smith. Beyond The Battle Museum. Saturday 1PM. The event is Free.
 - *Fallfest*, The Marketplace at Gettysburg, 2440 Baltimore Pike. Saturday. Local vendors, food, wine, kid's games, crafts and more. 8AM – 4PM.
 - *10TH Annual Sweet Potato Festival*, Thomason's Olde Thyme Herb Farm and Gift Shop, 170 Stoney Point Road, East Berlin. Saturday 9-4 & Sunday 11-4.
 - *1940's Dance – WWII Weekend*, World War II Experience. 845 Crooked Creek Road, Gettysburg. Saturday 6:30-10:00PM. Cost \$20.
 - *Adams County Winery 25TH Anniversary Celebration*. Saturday 10:00AM – 4PM. A new wine release, music, and wood fired pizza.
 - *Street Food Fiesta*, Adams County Farmers Market, Saturday 8-1, Gettysburg Rec Park.

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!