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February 27, 2023

Ashland County celebrated its 177th birthday last week! The Ashland County Courthouse, built in 1929, is the county's second and is located on the same site as the original.

If you are having issues viewing Counties Current in your email, click [View this email in your browser] at the top of the email.

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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2023 CCAO Roster published

2023 CCAO ROSTER

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CCAO

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CORSA
CEBCO
CCAO County Commissioners Association of Ohio Service Corporation

The 2023 CCAO Roster is on its way! Our signature publication is a valuable resource containing contact information and photos for CCAO members and staff as well as information on your state legislators, CCAO affiliates, members of Congress and more. We hope you take advantage of this tool, as it can be helpful in a variety of ways, from reaching out to fellow members on issues affecting your county to contacting legislators as we advocate for resources that build stronger counties for a stronger Ohio.

You can access the online version immediately by clicking here.

This publication will be mailed statewide, with copies going to each board of county commissioners, county executive and county council throughout the state. Paid affiliate members, OSU Extension, the Ohio Statehouse and additional partners will also receive a copy.

Publishing our annual roster is a huge undertaking, and we could not do it without the assistance of our county clerks and administrative staff. We thank you and truly appreciate the work you do to assist counties and CCAO.

Kris Jordan, Ohio House Representative and former Delaware County Commissioner, passes away

CCAO was saddened to hear the news on Saturday that State Representative Kris Jordan passed away.

Kris started his career in public service when he was elected Delaware County Commissioner at the age of 25. After six years as a commissioner, Kris won election to the Ohio House of Representatives. He served one term in the House before winning election to the Senate, where he served for eight years. After his two Senate terms, he returned to the House where he was in his third term.

CCAO thanks Kris for his service over two decades to Delaware County and Ohio. His family and friends are in our thoughts during this difficult time.

CCAO and OHPELRA launch Recruitment and Retention survey

CCAO and the Ohio Public Employer Labor Relations Association (OHPELRA) have joined together to conduct a survey of public employers across Ohio to help identify strategies that they are utilizing to retain and recruit employees during the current labor market. It is vital that public employers maintain robust workforces to provide services to their residents. By learning what colleagues in other parts of the state are doing to retain and recruit, public agencies can find what strategies would work for them in their own unique situation.

To foster participation, the results of this survey will be shared with those employers who respond one month before the results are shared generally.

This survey is open to all public employers, from county agencies, townships, school districts, state agencies, and everything in between.

You can access the survey here.

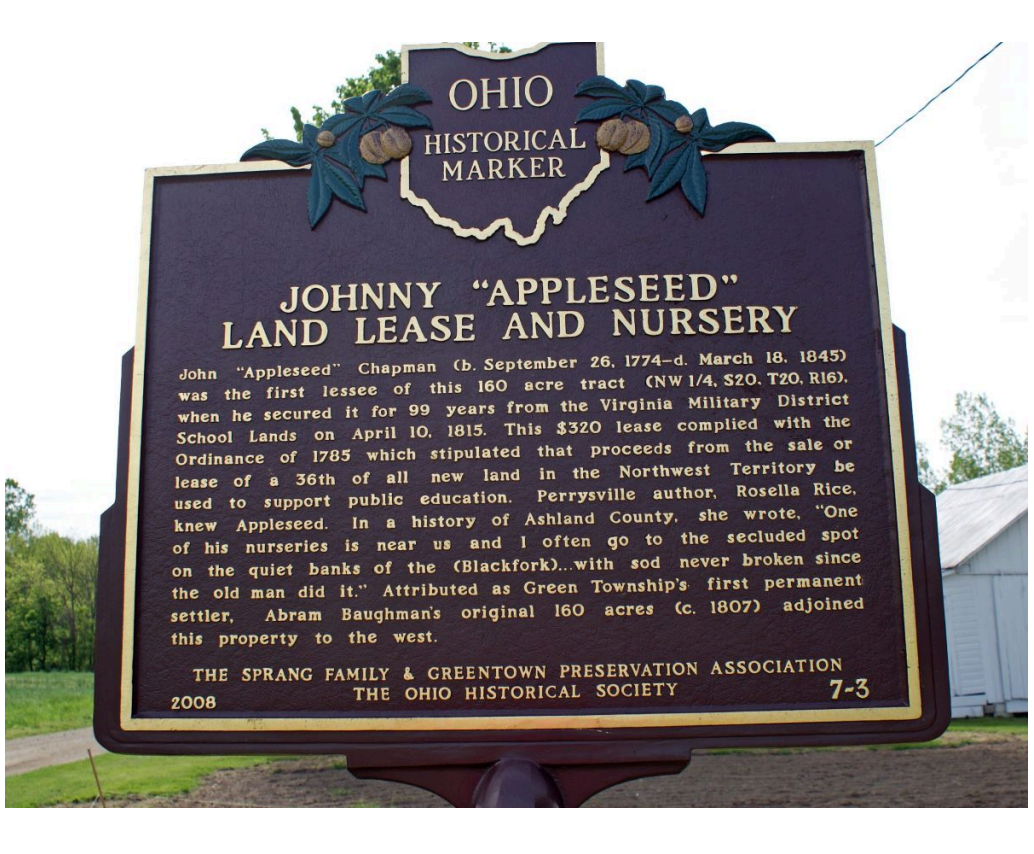
Thank you for your help in bolstering Ohio's public workforce!

Happy birthday to Ashland County!

Last week, on February 24, Ashland County celebrated its 177th birthday! Created out of land formerly belonging to Huron, Lorain, Richland, and Wayne counties, Ashland County is named after the home of Henry Clay, a US Senator from Kentucky who was one of the most prominent statesmen of the era.

Ashland County has not undergone significant changes to its borders, losing only a small portion of its territory to Richland County a year after it was created.

One early settler in the area that would become Ashland County was none other than John Chapman, better known as Johnny Appleseed. He leased 160 acres from the Virginia Military District School and used them as lands for his early nurseries.


OHIO HISTORICAL MARKER

JOHNNY "APPLESEED" LAND LEASE AND NURSERY

John "Appleseed" Chapman (b. September 26, 1774–d. March 18, 1845) was the first lessee of this 160 acre tract (NW 1/4, S20, T20, R16), when he secured it for 99 years from the Virginia Military District School Lands on April 10, 1815. This $320 lease complied with the Ordinance of 1785 which stipulated that proceeds from the sale or lease of a 36th of all new land in the Northwest Territory be used to support public education. Perrysville author, Rosella Rice, knew Appleseed. In a history of Ashland County, she wrote, "One of his nurseries is near us and I often go to the secluded spot on the quiet banks of the (Blackfork)...with sod never broken since the old man did it." Attributed as Green Township's first permanent settler, Abram Baughman's original 160 acres (c. 1807) adjoined this property to the west.

THE SPRANG FAMILY & GREENTOWN PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION
THE OHIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2008 7-3

(Note: Next week's Counties Current covers March 1, which is the birthday of 24 counties, the most on a single day. So as not to make next week's Counties Current longer than the state's operating budget bill, the counties celebrating birthdays on March 1 will be addressed in a separate post on the CCAO website. This post will be linked to in next week's issue)

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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Governor launches Nursing Home Quality and Accountability Task Force

Last week, Governor Mike DeWine today signed Executive Order 2023-06D, officially creating the Ohio Governor's Nursing Home Quality and Accountability Task Force. During his 2023 State of the State Address, Governor DeWine announced his plan to form the task force to study issues surrounding quality of life and quality of care in Ohio's nursing homes. The Governor also announced during his address that the group would be tasked with completing their work on an expedited timeline. In keeping with this directive, the task force will travel to communities across the state between now and May to hear directly from nursing home residents and their loved ones about their experiences and issue a report of their findings.

Ohio ranked 39th in the most recent Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services overall Quality Star Ratings, which scores all Medicare/Medicaid-funded nursing facilities between 1 (much below average) and 5 (much above average) stars on a variety of categories, including overall quality. Ohio's average overall nursing home quality currently ranks in the bottom quartile of all states. Additionally, many of the state's nursing facilities are inconsistent in their compliance with standards of care, being forced to correct the same deficiencies repeatedly.

The task force will be chaired by Director of the Department of Aging Ursel McElroy and is comprised of a number of other government officials and individuals with lived experience, nursing home administrative experience, and more. A full list of task force members can be found at the Task Force's website.

The Task Force's first meeting will take place on March 2, with the first community listening session held the following day at Columbus State Community College. The dates of the remaining events will be released on the Task Force's site as the information becomes available.

Ohio's sixth annual In-Demand Jobs Week is coming in May

The sixth annual In-Demand Jobs Week is May 1-5, 2023! In-Demand Jobs Week is the statewide celebration of the jobs, industries, and skills that are in-demand in Ohio. This year, In-Demand Jobs Week will highlight Ohio's top jobs that stem from career-focused education and the various paths available to Ohioans as they look for their next opportunity.

Example Career Pathways available in Ohio include:

- **Career Technical Education** – provides students of all ages with the academic and technical skills, knowledge, and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners.
- **Pre-Apprenticeships** – teaches entry-level technical and job-readiness skills for an apprentice occupation to prepare students for a formal Registered Apprenticeship training program upon graduation.
- **College Credit Plus** – helps students earn college and high school credits simultaneously by taking college courses from local colleges or universities while in high school.
- **Industry-Recognized Credentials** – demonstrates the knowledge and skills students gain through hands-on learning in a specific job or industry.

Business, education, and community leaders statewide are encouraged to partner to plan events promoting all of Ohio's opportunities, job-readiness, and more to inspire excitement and awareness among students and job seekers.

Organizations can add their event to the statewide interactive event map by emailing In-DemandJobs@JFS.Ohio.Gov with the event title, date, time, and a short description of the event.

To learn more about In-Demand Jobs Week and to view the statewide interactive event map, visit TopJobs.Ohio.Gov. With questions, please email In-DemandJobs@JFS.Ohio.Gov.

Pending Attorney General Opinions may impact board of county commissioners authority

There are two pending Attorney General Opinion requests that CCAO wants to make membership aware of. Opinions have not been issued for these yet, but the Association will include notification in future issues of Counties Current when they are issued.

The first comes from the Muskingum County Prosecuting Attorney and concerns the budgetary relationship between the board of county commissioners and the local Ohio State University Extension Services office. There are three questions within the request:

1. May a board of county commissioners appropriate funds directly to OSU Extension (whether from a levy or from the county general fund) or do the funds have to be appropriated to the OSU Extension Fund first?
2. May a board of county commissioners charge the OSU Extension office for the use of office space, including the provision of utility services?; and
3. If a board of commissioners are permitted to appropriate funds directly to the Extension office, may the funds include money to cover the rent and utility services charged to the Extension office?

This request was submitted on January 30 with a revision on February 1.

The second request comes from the Ashtabula County Prosecuting Attorney and concerns the authority of county elected officials to make changes to their office space without the approval of the board of county commissioners. Specifically, the request seeks clarity on four questions:

1. Do county elected officials (other than the board of county commissioners) have authority to make maintenance/repairs/improvements to their own office space over the objection of the county commissioners, as long as the value of the property does not diminish as a result of the changes?
2. Can county elected officials use Furtherance of Justice Funds or other separate funds to make maintenance/repairs/improvements to county property?
3. Do the county commissioners have the authority to enter secured spaces of other elected officials' office space without authority or permission of said elected official?; and
4. Do the county commissioners have exclusive authority to prohibit maintenance/repairs/improvements made by other elected county officials, assuming the items are budgeted from the general fund?

This opinion was requested on January 31.

EDUCATION AND GRANTS

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Visit the Grants and Funding Opportunities page on the CCAO website for a detailed listing of open grant programs.

Ohio Safety Congress & Expo opens registration

Registration is open! The 2023 Ohio Safety Congress & Expo® (OSC23®) will be live and in-person at the Greater Columbus Convention Center, March 8-10, 2023. This year, a select number of sessions will also be live-streamed.

With over 100 educational sessions and continuing education, there is something for everyone at OSC23®. Choose between 10 educational tracks, including one for government employee safety. ***Training satisfies the BWC 2-hour safety training requirement for Group Rating and Group Retro members.***

Registration is free!

New for 2023 – The Knowledge Hub located on the South side of the Expo Marketplace. Participate in live demonstrations and experience workshops on a new level.

For more information and to register, visit www.ohiosafetycongress.com.

Glenn College of Public Affairs releases Spring/Summer MAPS schedule

The John Glenn College of Public Affairs at the Ohio State University hosts a number of professional development courses every year as part of its MAPS (Management Advancement for the Public Service) program.

Courses are offered online and in-person on OSU's Columbus campus and cost $275 per course, although discounts and assistance may be available. Some MAPS courses may count towards Continuing Legal Education credits.

CCAO is highlighting the MAPS courses below that may be of interest to counties. You can find a complete listing of courses here.

Practical Skills for New Supervisors

- This course will focus on the transition from peer to supervisor roles. Participants discuss staff management, goal setting, staff evaluations, dealing with the friend v. supervisor role and discipline.
- April 5, OSU Columbus Campus

Foundations of Community Engagement

- As a community leader, it is important for you to have a good understanding of the purpose, approaches and tools for engaging your community, and working effectively with your leadership team to promote community engagement. During this session, participants will learn best practices for community engagement.
- April 11, Virtual (Zoom)

Communications Skills Bootcamp for Public Service Professionals

- This course offers strategies to improve and elevate the ability to communicate concisely, clearly, completely and credibly is a critical skill in the public policy arena.
- April 26, OSU Columbus Campus

Ohio Public Records Law; To Release or Not, That is the Question

- Learn what records citizens are allowed to see, how to provide information to reporters without violating the law, and protect your agency from lawsuits.
- May 4, Virtual (Zoom)

The Budget as an Important Tool for Management

- This course will explore budgeting concepts and practice, how budgets reflect an area's economy, demographics, and society, and how effective budgeting can be essential for the leader and manager of an organization.
- May 23, OSU Columbus Campus
- Six Continuing Legal Education credits

Current Trends in Human Resources Documentation, Communication, and Policy

- This course provides an overview of HR documentation best practices, communication strategies, and policy analysis to create safer, more equitable workplaces. Learn how to effectively document events or issues, communicate to team members, and analyze policies related to HR issues.
- June 21, OSU Columbus Campus
- Six Continuing Legal Education credits

GOPC to host Brownfields Conference in May, registration now open

The Greater Ohio Policy Center (GOPC) will host the 2023 Ohio Brownfields Conference on May 9, 2023 in Columbus! Early bird registration is open until the end of February. Register today to lock in a discounted rate.

The conference will feature an exhibitor hall for attendees to connect and network with remediation and redevelopment professionals. Information on educational panels has been announced and can be found on the OhioBrownfields.com website. Accreditation is in process for Continuing Learning Education (CLE) credits through the Ohio Supreme Court and AICP credits through the American Planning Association.

The lunchtime Keynote will be Tom Murphy, former mayor of Pittsburgh and current senior resident fellow and Canizaro/Klingbeil Families Chair for Urban Development at Urban Land Institute (ULI). During his time as mayor, Murphy initiated a public/private partnership strategy that leveraged more than $4.5 billion in economic development activity for the city. Murphy also developed strategic partnerships to transform more than 1,000 acres of blighted, abandoned industrial properties into new commercial, residential, retail, and public uses.

Full more information about the 2023 Ohio Brownfields Conference, please visit OhioBrownfields.com. Please direct any questions about registration or sponsorship to Aaron Clapper (aclapper@greaterohio.org or 740-221-9584).

Grant writing assistance and resources available

Grants are a valuable resource for counties to utilize, but knowing how best to develop competitive applications can be difficult and the learning curve cause counties to lose out on grants. Luckily, federal agencies and nonprofits offer resources to assist in developing competitive applications. Federal agency websites point to internal and external sources and many conduct free training and targeted one on one or small group technical assistance. Here are some current resources to explore:

- Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse
- Great Lakes Community Action Partnership
- Local Infrastructure Hub
- National Wildlife Federation
- Rural Community Assistance Partnership
- State and Community Energy Programs-Tools and Resources
- US Department of Transportation
- USDA Rural Development
- 10,000 Communities Initiative

Ohio Workforce Association posts upcoming training opportunities

The Ohio Workforce Association has posted a number of upcoming professional development course opportunities for the coming months. All sessions are virtual and cost $195 per attendee. If you are interested in registering for any of the sessions, you can do so by calling Mona Zink at 330-244-3508.

- **Effective Organizational Leadership: Engage and Execute** (March 23)
- **Generations Working Together** (April 20)
  - If you interact with several generations of employees or customers and want to improve productivity, communication cohesiveness and morale, you will gain a new perspective from this highly engaging program presented by the facilitator in costume and language style of each generation.
- **Coaching Accountability** (May 17)
  - Participants will discuss and develop action plans for coaching one of the most difficult employee mindsets: resistance to change and responsibility. They will learn to encourage accountability for innovation, creative problem solving and collaboration in today's empowered team environments.

SAM.gov, federal grant portal, walkthrough available

Last month, the US General Services Administration hosted an online forum to help walk state and local officials through how to use SAM.gov. The website is the primary portal for intergovernmental assistance from the federal government to state and local governments.

The Administration has made the presentation slide deck and the recording of the session available for download, as well as a one-page guide.

ARPA and BIL RESOURCES

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This section of Counties Current will be a permanent fixture for the foreseeable future to help counties with the ins and outs of the American Rescue Plan Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. These two laws provide a once-in-a-generation investment.

Federal legislation increases ARPA flexibility for infrastructure, disaster response, and CDBG projects

The federal Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 was signed into law on December 29, 2022. The legislation contains important updates to how counties and other local governments may use their ARPA funds. First, the Act codifies the standard allowance included in the US Department of the Treasury's Final Rule that permits counties to use up to $10 million for the provision of government services under the "revenue loss" eligibility category without having to demonstrate losses through a complicated formula. This codification means that the Treasury Department cannot alter the standard allowance in any subsequent rulemaking.

The Act also permits counties to use the greater of $10 million or 30 percent of their total ARPA allocation for federal infrastructure projects, responding to natural disasters, or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) projects. Counties must expend these funds no later than September 30, 2026, rather than the standard date of December 31, 2026. Eligible natural disaster responses include emergency relief and the negative economic impacts of natural disasters, including temporary emergency housing, food assistance, financial assistance for lost wages, or other immediate needs. CDBG projects must meet the requirements of Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974.

Some of the federal infrastructure programs eligible for ARPA match include the National Highway Performance Program; Bridge Investment Program; Surface Transportation Block Grant Program; and, the Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program. More information, and a complete list of eligible transportation programs, is available from NACo at this link.

Resources for ARPA Reporting and Compliance

The most recent version of the US Treasury Reporting Guidance was published September 20, 2022. Counties and other local governments with populations greater than 250,000 or ARPA distributions greater than $10 million are required to file Project and Expenditure Reports no later than 30 days after the end of each quarter throughout the grant period. Other recipients will file Project and Expenditure Reports annually by April 30.

Members are urged to consult resources from US Treasury, NACo, and the Ohio Office of Budget and Management for more information about reporting and how to use ARPA funds. CCAO maintains a list of ARPA links and resources, including a comparison of state and federal procurement laws, at the ARPA Resources page.

Ohio Ethics Commission issues statement regarding stimulus funds

Last week the Ohio Ethics Commission released a statement ensuring that public officials are aware that stimulus funds, such as those received under the federal American Rescue Plan Act and the funds that communities will receive under Governor Mike DeWine's Appalachian investment program, are public funds and that conflict of interest laws must be observed.

To that effect, the Commission also recirculated its Advisory Opinion No. 2009-006, issued in 2009 regarding stimulus funds made available to governments under the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It provides a more in-depth examination of potential conflicts of interest with stimulus funds, including a discussing regarding vendors.

CCAO encourages members refamiliarize themselves with this Advisory Opinion and conflict of interest laws to ensure good stewardship of ARPA and Appalachia funds.

Guidance and overview of available BIL funding available from NACo and the Ohio Department of Transportation

NACo and ODOT each host a resource page providing information to counties about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The pages are rich with information including multiple tables providing overviews and links to funding opportunities, a timeline of upcoming grant programs, and much more.

The NACo website can be found here and the ODOT website can be found here.

CCAO strongly encourages counties to frequently visit the sites and apply for funding through the myriad of programs to bring valuable federal funds to Ohio communities.

COUNTY NEWS

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Each week Counties Current highlights the happenings in our counties in the words of their local media. One county from each of the CCAO's five districts is highlighted.

Northwest District

Henry commissioners hold another tire-rate hearing, approve JFS bonuses

Crescent News, February 24, 2023

Henry County commissioners held a second hearing on proposed landfill rate increases for tire disposal during their Thursday meeting, and approved bonuses for job and family services (JFS) employees.

The changes would increase the cost of tires to 10 cents per pound for licensed transporters, 12.5 cents per pound for Henry County residents and 15 cents per pound for all other tires.

Commissioners plan to consider a resolution next week approving the new rates following a third and final public hearing at 915 a.m. Tuesday. This would allow the rates to go into effect on March 1, according to the commissioners' office.

No public input was received during Thursday's hearing.

Defiance County Engineer Warren Schlatter has indicated his intention to propose a tire rate only increase for the county's Canal Road landfill that he manages. Defiance County commissioners would need to approve such a rate increase.

Northeast District

Wayne County commissioners eye buggy, bike lanes for safer roads

The Daily Record, February 24, 2023

KEY ACTION Amended a funding resolution to up the cost for a project that would add buggy lanes on either side of Kidron Road in Wayne County and bike lanes in Apple Creek.

DISCUSSION Commissioners Ron Amstutz, Sue A. Smail and Jonathan Hofstetter voted on Feb. 22 to increase the estimated cost by $50,000 of a project that would add 8-foot buggy lanes on Kidron Road to Hackett Road as a safety upgrade. The addition would bring the total cost to near $25 million. The project could be reimbursed by a federal Department of Transportation RAISE grant — Rebuilding America Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity.

A warning system would be part of the upgrade to help prevent collisions and alert other drivers of buggies passing through. The project would also include a 6-foot bike lane on either side of Buss and Apple Creek roads, and Bank Street, to improve safety at Buss and Cutter roads in Apple Creek at the Ohio to Erie Trail and the Heartland Rails-to-Trails bike paths.

Central District

Commissioners OK design work for Bellville sewer upgrade

Mansfield News Journal, February 22, 2023

The Richland County commissioners have taken the first step to upgrading the Bellville sewer system to be ready for future development in the area. The board voted on Tuesday to approve a $43,344 contract with Richland Engineering to do the preliminary design work for what officials say is expected to ultimately be a "seven figure" project.

Commissioners voted last September to approve an addendum to a 41-year-old contract with the Village of Bellville that calls for the county to upgrade county-owned sewer lines on the north side of the village in the general area of the Interstate 71 and Ohio 97 interchange, pay for an upgrade to a lift station, and turn the infrastructure over to the village. The sewer lines existed before Bellville expanded its corporation lines north but remained in the county system because of what was described as a "quirk" in Ohio law.

Southwest District

Commissioners accept donation from Friends of the Highland County Dog Pound; discuss Municipal Court request, permissive sales receipts

Highland County Press, February 22, 2023

During their Wednesday, Feb. 22 meeting, Highland County commissioners Terry Britton, David Daniels and Brad Roades accepted a check from Friends of the Highland County Dog Pound, as the group received a grant for a dog grooming tub for the county's soon-to-be-completed animal shelter.

Presenting the check on behalf of the organization was Ted McReynolds.

McReynolds described the Friends of the Highland County Dog Pound as a "local 501(c)(3) nonprofit group that raises funds to help move the dogs out of the pound and on to rescues and foster care and adoption.

"We also help with costs of things that the county doesn't cover to support the dogs and the wardens," he said.

According to McReynolds, the group applied for, and was awarded, a $2,770 grant from the South Central Power Foundation for a dog grooming tub to be placed in the new shelter.

Southeast District

Commissioners discuss sewer system tie-ins, future projects

Athens Messenger, February 20, 2023

As the work finishes on the U.S. Route 50 Sanitation Sewer project, questions about tie-ins and which areas of the county will be served next are being addressed.

The Athens County Board of Commissioners discussed some of these issues during its Feb. 16 meeting at the conference room on the second floor of the courthouse annex.

As of the February construction meeting, the construction is about 93% complete on the main part of the project, said Project Supervisor Gary Silcott with DLZ.

Phase 5 — near Roscoe Road — is about 66% done. Silcott said they expect to wrap up in the next two months.

Phases 6 and 7 — the areas near Edgewood Lane and Country Club Road — will start around the end of February or March 1, he said. The work will be done by Fields Excavating.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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FEBRUARY 27 - MARCH 1
NEW MEMBER TRANINING (CCAO BOARD MEETING ON THE 27TH)

MARCH 31
CEBCO ANNUAL MEETING

DID YOU KNOW?

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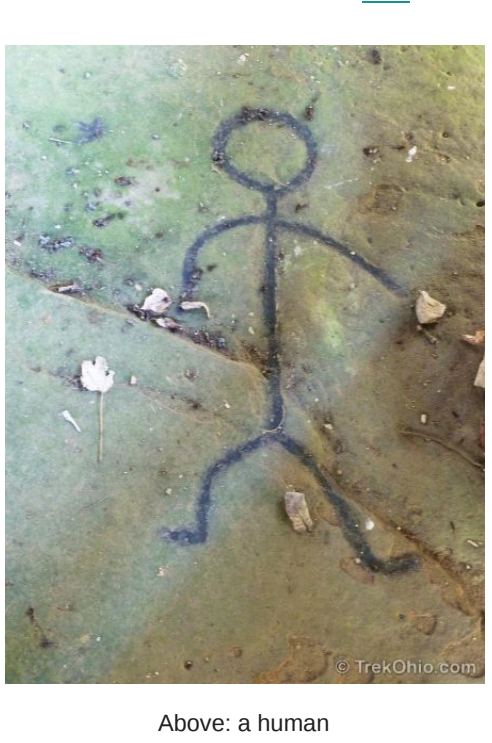
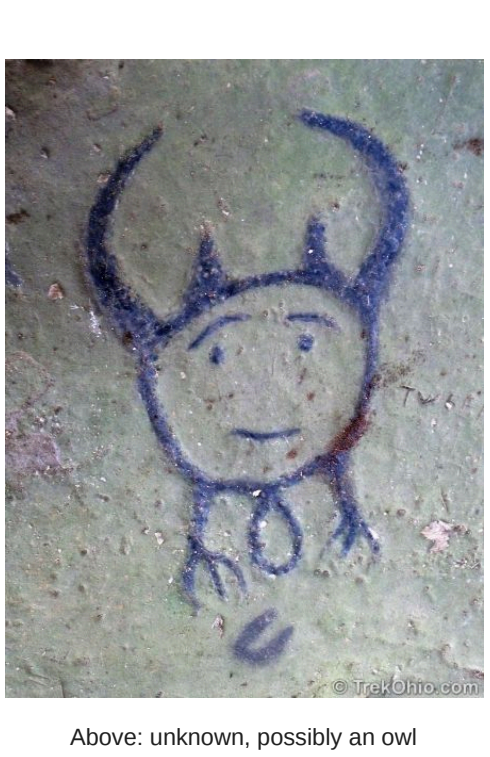
Jackson County

Jackson County is home to one of the more remarkable prehistoric sites in the state, the Leo Petroglyphs. The site is home to 37 drawings engraved into the sandstone cliffs, believed to date back between 400-1,000 years (since there is no organic matter associated with the site, carbon dating is impossible; instead, the age of the carvings is estimated based on the weathering of the sandstone). This would place the date of the site during the time when the Fort Ancient culture was the dominant group in modern-day Ohio.

You can learn more about the site here.

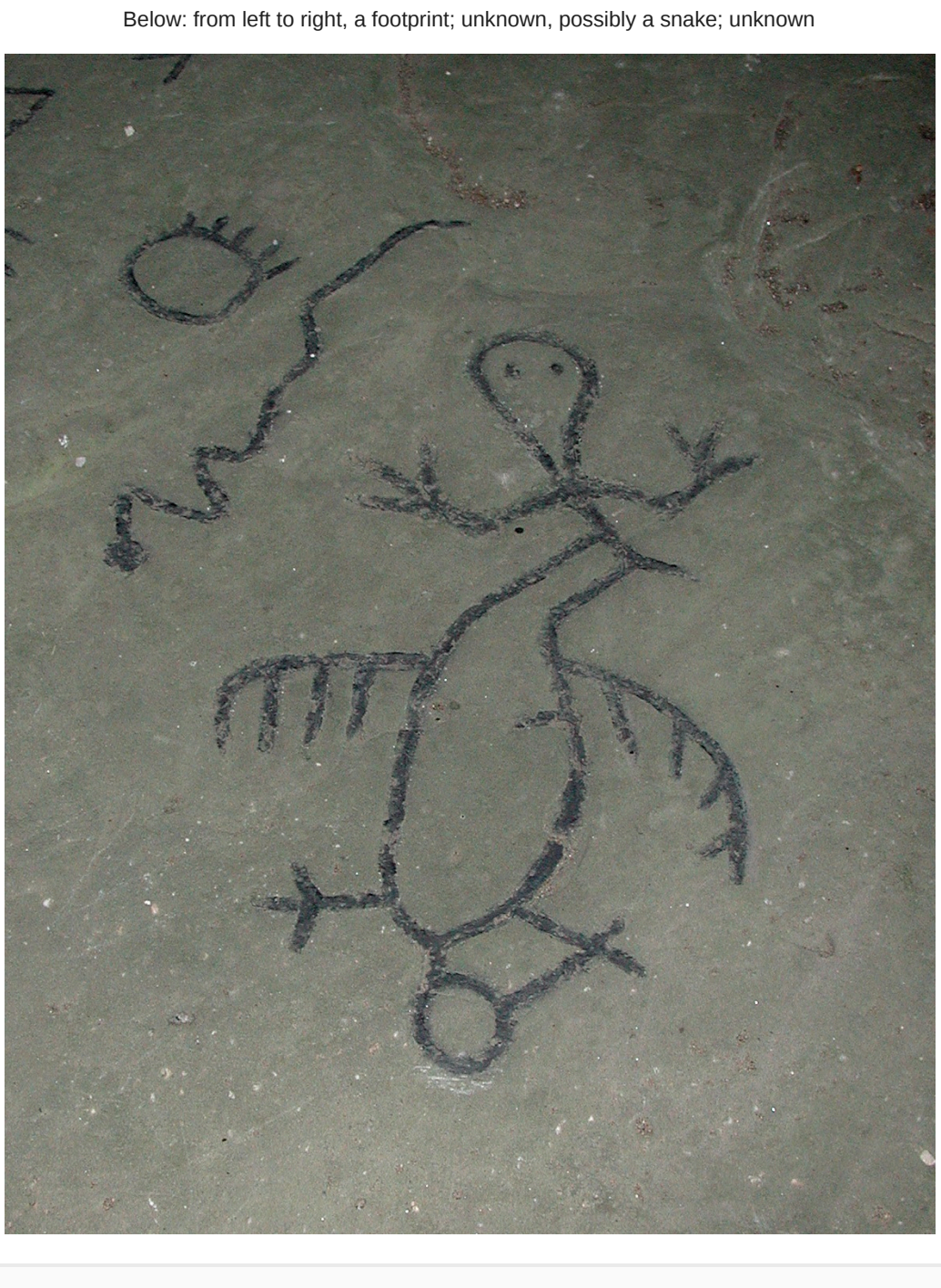


Above: a human



Above: unknown, possibly an owl

Below: from left to right, a footprint; unknown, possibly a snake; unknown



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