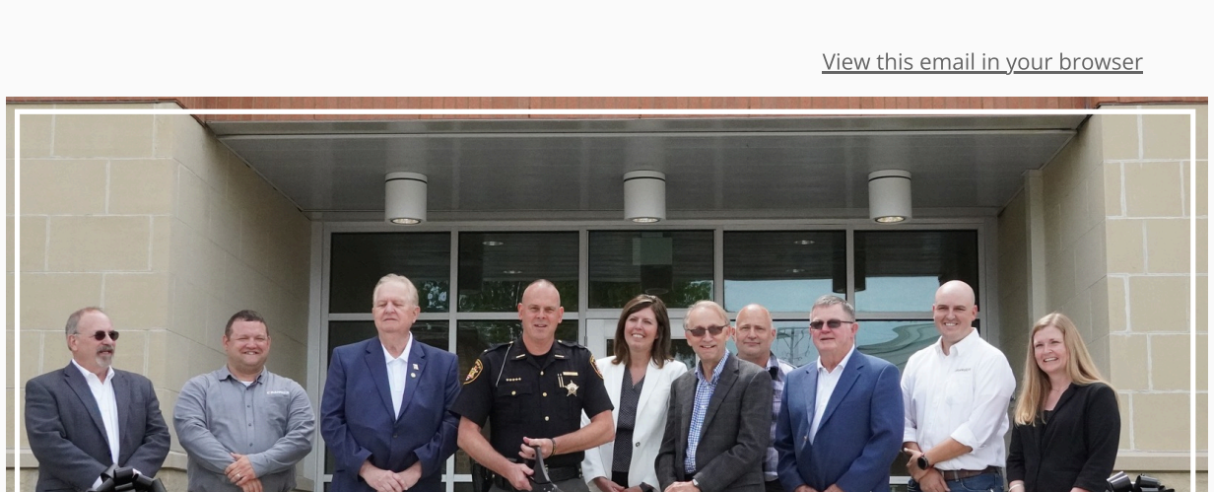

June 26, 2023

Gallia County Commissioners David K. Smith, Leslie Henry, and Jay Stapleton joined Gallia County Sheriff Matt Champlin and other Gallia County officials at the ribbon cutting ceremony for the county's new jail last week.

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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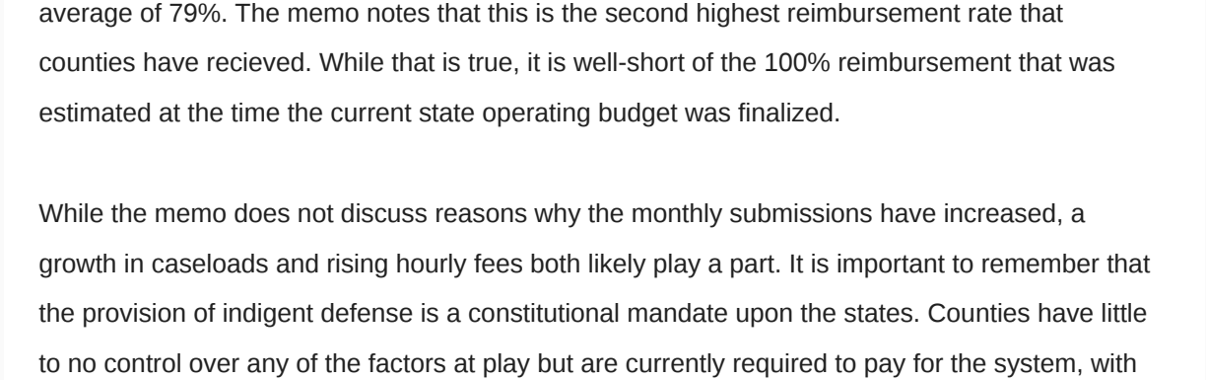
Public Defender issues memo on county reimbursement; final rate to be 79%

Last Friday, the Office of the Ohio Public Defender (OPD) issued a memorandum to appointed counsel, county public defender offices, judges, court administrators, auditors, and county commissioners regarding the indigent defense reimbursement rate for State Fiscal Year 2023.

In the memo, which can be accessed here, OPD states that due to an increase in monthly submissions, the final months of the fiscal year will be reimbursed at 66%, for a final fiscal year average of 79%. The memo notes that this is the second highest reimbursement rate that counties have recieved. While that is true, it is well-short of the 100% reimbursement that was estimated at the time the current state operating budget was finalized.

While the memo does not discuss reasons why the monthly submissions have increased, a growth in caseloads and rising hourly fees both likely play a part. It is important to remember that the provision of indigent defense is a constitutional mandate upon the states. Counties have little to no control over any of the factors at play but are currently required to pay for the system, with reimbursement from the state. As last week's memo highlights, that reimbursement is uncertain.

If you have questions or comments about the latest memo from OPD, please contact the office's Policy & Outreach Division at 614.466.5394 or at outreach@opd.ohio.gov.


SAVE THE DATE!
CCAO
Summer Symposium
August 16–18, 2023
Economic Development Strategies: Ohio Counties Reaching Forward
For County Commissioners, County Executives and County Council Members and Their Key Staff
Early Bird Registration Opens Early June
AREAS OF INTEREST
Economic Development Practices
Workforce Development Case Studies
Successful Landbank Practices
Expanding Broadband Services

Register today for CCAO's 2023 Summer Symposium!

Registration for CCAO's 2023 Summer Symposium is now open! Taking place at Cherry Valley Hotel in Newark from August 16 to August 18, the symposium is titled Economic Development Strategies: Ohio Counties Reaching Forward and will feature sessions on broadband, landbanks, case studies of economic development successes in counties around the state, and more.

Registration for the event can be completed on CCAO's site and reservations at Cherry Valley Hotel can be made here.

Also taking place on Wednesday, August 16, is the County Classic, a golf outing to benefit the CCAO Research & Education Foundation. The Classic will take place at the Clover Valley Golf Club in Johnstown. Transportation to the course from the Cherry Valley Hotel will be provided. You can register for the County Classic here.

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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FINAL WEEK to utilize the children services workforce recruitment and retention grant

The window for spending a one-time $15 million grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to county public children services agencies (PCSAs) last year will **close June 30**.

The workforce recruitment and retention grant, which is managed by the Public Children Services Association of Ohio, was allocated to counties by formula in June 2022 to improve recruitment and retention of frontline workers. ODJFS offered counties a number of options for spending the grant, including various types of incentives and bonuses, tuition payment and loan reimbursement, culture and climate initiatives, flexible/hybrid work options, and more. Many of these options were identified in an OSU report on the children services workforce released by PCSAO in February 2022. The grant provided a rare opportunity to offer bonuses and make purchases outside the normal course of business.

Some county agencies have spent their entire allotment, while others have scheduled retention bonuses to be paid by the end of June. According to PCSAO, grant funds **must be entirely expended by June 30**, with final reports and grant closeout due September 10.

PCSAO added that one-time funding presents unique challenges, particularly when in the form of a grant. JFS and Children Services Board directors worked closely with commissioners last year to identify the most feasible, flexible and sometimes creative spending options for the county, but given the ongoing workforce crisis, plans evolved.

With a hard deadline of June 30, commissioners can help ensure that the entire local allocation is expended by working with PCSA directors to shift unspent funds to other allowable grant expenses or to relinquish unspent funds to other counties that can use them.

NACo partners with Homeland Security on cyber protections

With an increase in cyber threats, ranging from phishing attempts to ransomware attacks, NACo has partnered with the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, a body within the US Department of Homeland Security, to promote county cybersecurity practices.

NACo members can learn more about the partnership here.

CCAO, the CCAO Service Corporation, and CORSA will highlight more cybersecurity opportunities in the coming weeks.

Update on OneOhio opioid settlements and structure

The last month has brought three new developments on related to the OneOhio opioid settlement arrangement and structure. First, as was reported in last week's *Counties Current*, Ohio recently reached a settlement with two developers (Teva and Allergan) and two pharmacies (CVS and Walgreens) that will bring nearly $680 million to Ohio over the next 15 years. Under the OneOhio agreement, 55% of opioid-related settlements the state receives goes to the OneOhio Recovery Foundation for use at regional and statewide levels, 30% goes directly to local governments participating in the lawsuits (with some stipulations), and 15% goes to directly to the state.

Second, the OneOhio Recovery Foundation recently received official designation from the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. This designation exempts the Foundation from federal income taxes and allows donors to the foundation to deduct contributions they make \under IRC Section 170 and qualifies the Foundation also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts.

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.

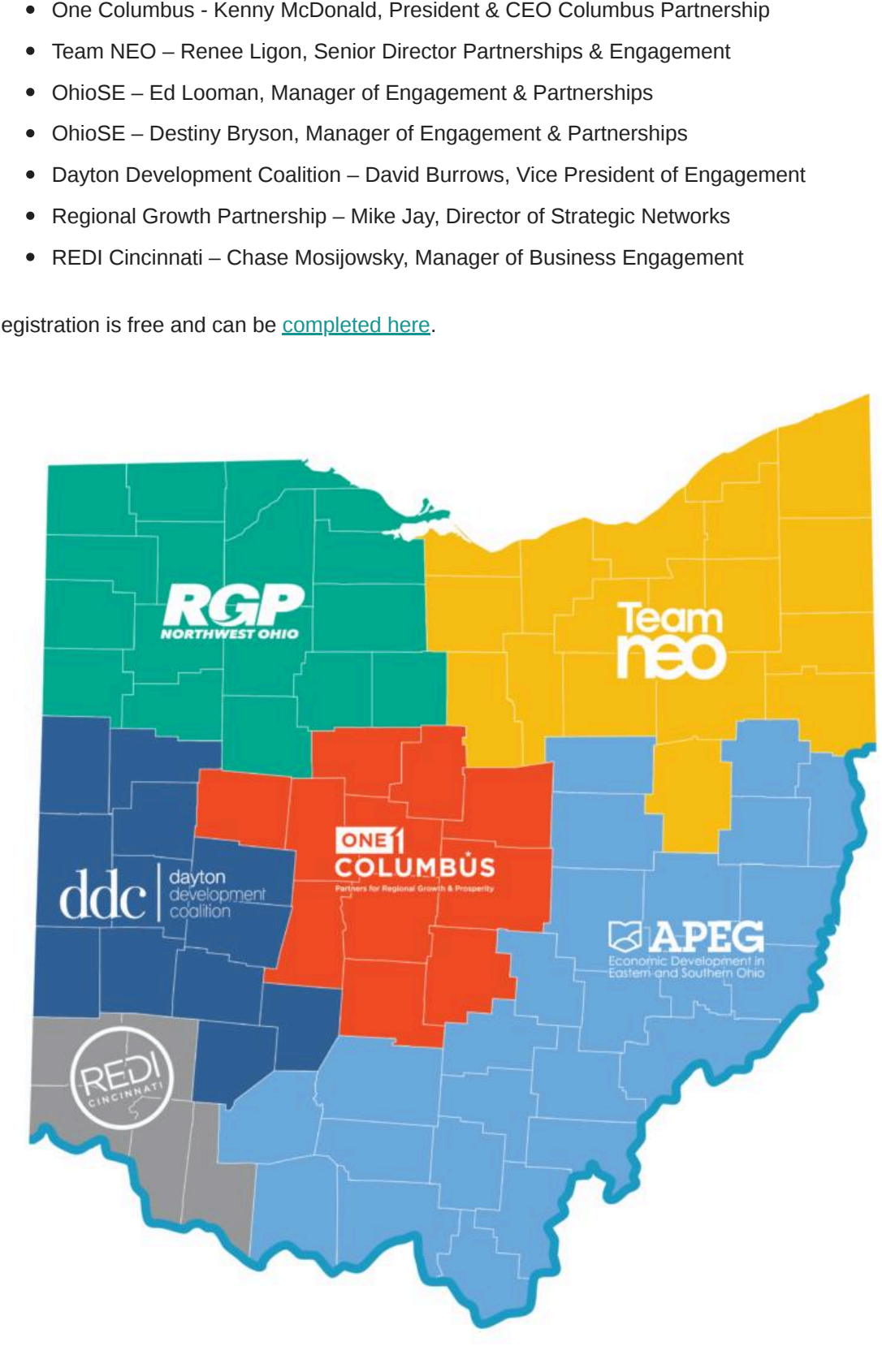
CCAO, JobsOhio to host webinar in July

On Wednesday, July 12, join members from JobsOhio and JobsOhio Regional Network Partners from around the state for an introduction to JobsOhio. During this presentation, JobsOhio will provide an overview of how the state's unique model is working to provide a ***Competitive Advantage for Ohio***. The presentation will provide two recent project examples showcasing successful regional and local collaboration.

Presenters will include representatives from JobsOhio and each regional partner:

- JobsOhio - Darnita Bradley, Senior Manager Local Government Affairs & External Engagement
- One Columbus - Kenny McDonald, President & CEO Columbus Partnership
- Team NEO – Renee Ligon, Senior Director Partnerships & Engagement
- OhioSE – Ed Looman, Manager of Engagement & Partnerships
- OhioSE – Destiny Bryson, Manager of Engagement & Partnerships
- Dayton Development Coalition – David Burrows, Vice President of Engagement
- Regional Growth Partnership – Mike Jay, Director of Strategic Networks
- REDI Cincinnati – Chase Mosijowsky, Manager of Business Engagement

Registration is free and can be completed here.


RGP NORTHWEST OHIO
Team neo
ONE COLUMBUS
Partners for Regional Growth & Prosperity
ddc dayton development coalition
APEG Economic Development in Eastern and Southern Ohio
REDI CINCINNATI

Save the date! Ohio Workforce Association to host inaugural training conference

On September 21 and 22, the Ohio Workforce Association will be hosting its inaugural Workforce Training Conference. The Conference will be held at the Nationwide Hotel and Conference Center in Lewis Center, Ohio.

Registration and hotel reservation details will be announced in the future.

NACo offering cyberattack simulation training to NACo members

CCAO is highlighting three NACo cybersecurity offerings that it will host this year, all of which are cyberattack simulations. The simulations are designed and presented in partnership with the Professional Development Academy, risk managers, chief information security officers, chief information officers, and more.

Registration is open only to NACo members and a single event registration costs $150 per individual. You can register for all three events at one time for $450 per individual.

The second, scheduled for September 11 to Spetember 15, is a simulation of a ransomware attack. Ransomware attacks involve a virus typically disguised as a harmless file that prohibits access to vital and sensitive files until the owner pays a ransom to regain access. If the ransom is not paid, the files may be permanent erased or released to malicious third parties.

The third simulation is scheduled for December 4 to December 8 and will focus on the employee management aspect of cyberattacks and how an aware and conscious workforce can help prevent cyberattacks.

If you are interested in joining NACo to gain access to useful trainings such as these, please contact CCAO Assistant Director John Leutz, CCAO Service Corporation Manager Steve Caraway, or CCAO Boards Liaison and Events Manager Robin Garrett.

SAM.gov, federal grant portal, walkthrough available; grant writing resources 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.

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. Luckly, 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

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.

Updated comparison of state and federal procurement law available

Bricker Graydon has shared a revised comparison of Ohio procurement law and federal uniform guidance. The document is intended to provide a comparison of the procurement rules and regulations prescribed by both federal law and state law, as they relate to Ohio counties using ARPA funds. Counties must comply with both state and federal law, where possible. Where federal requirements are more restrictive than state law, federal law must be followed. Where state law is more restrictive than federal requirements, state law must be followed.

The key revision regards state term contracts (page 8), which counties may participate in but Bricker Graydon suggests exercising caution and reviewing Auditor of State training materials before doing so.

The information presented in the chart was prepared by Bricker Graydon LLP as a service to CCAO. This information is intended solely for informational purposes of CCAO and its members and is not intended to constitute legal advice to, and may not be relied upon by, any party. Readers should engage legal counsel to provide legal advice related to any specific transaction.

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 Bipartican 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

Approval nearing for the $1.4 million West Jennings Creek cleanup project

Times Bulletin, June 23, 2023

The approval for a project aimed at cleaning a 5 1/2-mile stretch of West Jennings Creek is drawing closer. The cleanup, estimated to cost $1.4 million, will primarily affect property owners in Van Wert County, but it will also have an impact on Allen and Putnam Counties.

On Thursday, the Van Wert County Engineer's office submitted a proposal to the Van Wert County Commissioners. These commissioners will subsequently present the proposal to the Allen and Putnam County Commissioners during a scheduled phone conference on Tuesday, July 11, at 11 a.m.

The group will decide when to conduct a public hearing to gather feedback on whether to proceed with the citizen-initiated petition or not. During this meeting, property owners within the watershed will likely learn about the potential costs they may bear.

Van Wert County Engineer Kyle Wendel anticipates encountering opposition at the meeting. "I guarantee it. Because no matter what we do, no matter what method we choose, there are people out there right now that just flat out don't want to see it happen because they don't want to pay for it, and I can understand that. You know, there are people who could care less about this ditch out there. But this is an Ohio Revised Code method that requires everybody in the watershed using that ditch for drainage purposes to contribute their fair share to get it cleaned out," Wendel explained.

Northeast District

Anonymous donors give $1 million to expand Lorain County Dog Kennel

Morning Journal, June 17, 2023

Two anonymous donors have committed $1 million to the Lorain County Dog Kennel to expand its facilities.

The news was announced at a Lorain County Commission meeting July 16 by Karen Perkins, the county's chief deputy administrator.

Perkins told the commissioners she'd met with both the dog warden's office staff as well as canine rescue groups that help house stray dogs when the county's dog kennel is full, which is often.

Perkins proposed lowering adoption fees to allow more people to adopt dogs that need "forever homes."

Since the cost of living has increased in a troubled national economy, more residents cannot afford their dogs and are going to extreme measures such as abandoning them in the wild to get rid of them, she said.

Central District

Richland County commissioners award ARPA funds to Friendly House

Mansfield News Journal, June 24, 2023

The Richland County commissioners have agreed to allocate $146,200 in restricted American Rescue Plan Act funds to help Friendly House Preschool and Daycare in Mansfield replace sidewalks, resolve a drainage problem and install an emergency generator. The three commissioners also indicated that, although they are helping the North Mulberry Street facility, they are still willing to consider a future proposal for ARPA funds for a community center that the North End Community Improvement Collaborative is hoping to build less than a half mile away.

Friendly House Executive Director Terry Conard told the board that the organization is looking to install a trench drain that would be connected to the city's storm sewer system to relieve a problem with water pooling in front of and getting into the facility's garage. He said a catch basin that was installed along the road is higher than the Friendly House grounds and is not dealing with the water.

Southwest District

Greene County Jail project delayed for months, may grow back to original size

Dayton Daily News, June 23, 2023

The start of construction on Greene County's $75 million jail has been delayed as the county is adjusting to add a Sheriff's office and administration space back into the plans for the facility.

The county has a new tentative groundbreaking date of November, as state grant money prompted the county to revisit previous reductions in scope that brought the project in at $60 million. The county had originally hoped to start construction this spring or early summer.

The county and architecture firm Wachtel and McAnally have been through seven different iterations of the jail facility plans. Until recently, they had scrapped plans to build the Sheriff's Administration, Criminal Investigations Division, and the Coroner's Office at the new jail, because of cost.

In April, the State of Ohio awarded the county $15 million in grant money, which may allow those elements to be added back in.

Southeast District

Jefferson County seeks slice of $500 million grant for local projects, explores additional funding sources

WTOV9, June 22, 2023

Jefferson County is continuing the application process for an Appalachian Regional Commission Grant, a slice of a $500 million state program.

Jefferson County Port Authority Director Robert Naylor told county commissioners Thursday more guidance has come from the state about eligible projects, and some ineligible projects won't be abandoned by funding decisions.

"It's a fluid process," Naylor said. "And we have to then, after we secure this funding and start the process, we then take the next step and we say, 'How can we build upon that and how can we find other funding sources for these other fabulous projects?'"

DATES TO REMEMBER

Please view the CCAO Calendar for a comprehensive list of events to note.

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JUNE 30
CEBCO Board Meeting

JULY 4
Independence Day

JULY 6
Joint CCAO Agriculture Committee and Water Quality Task Force Meeting

JULY 12
CCAO-JobsOhio Webinar

JULY 21 - 24
NACo Annual Conference (Austin, Texas)

County Fair Dates:
You can access a full schedule here.

DID YOU KNOW?

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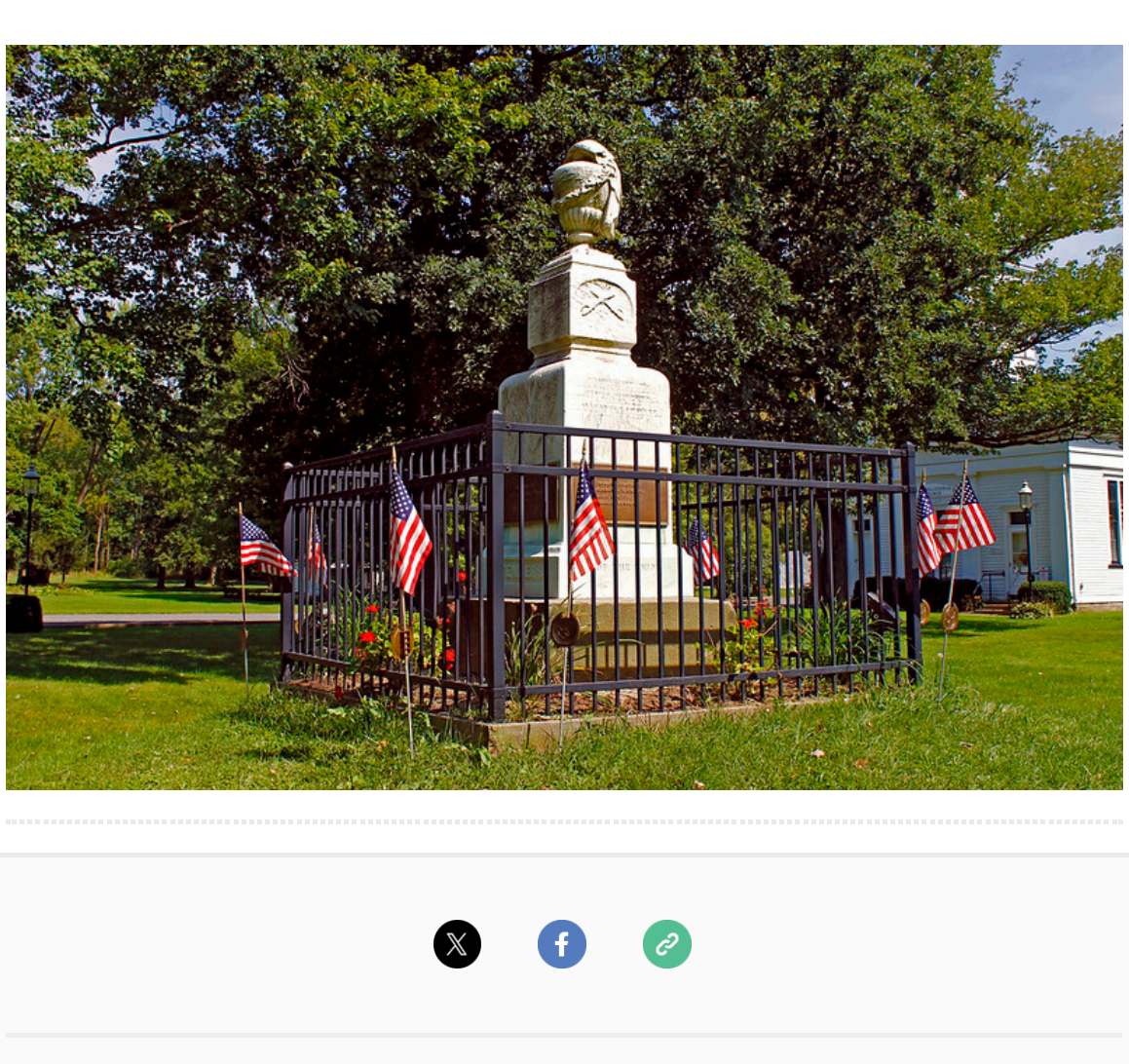
Trumbull County

The earliest monument to Civil War soldiers can be found in Bristol Township of Trumbull County. Many of the Bristol men who volunteered at the outset of the war died in the early battles of the Shiloh, Perryville, and Cedar Mountain.

In 1863, as the war still raged, the civilians of the township raised funds and placed a monument in the form of a marble draped funeral urn.



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