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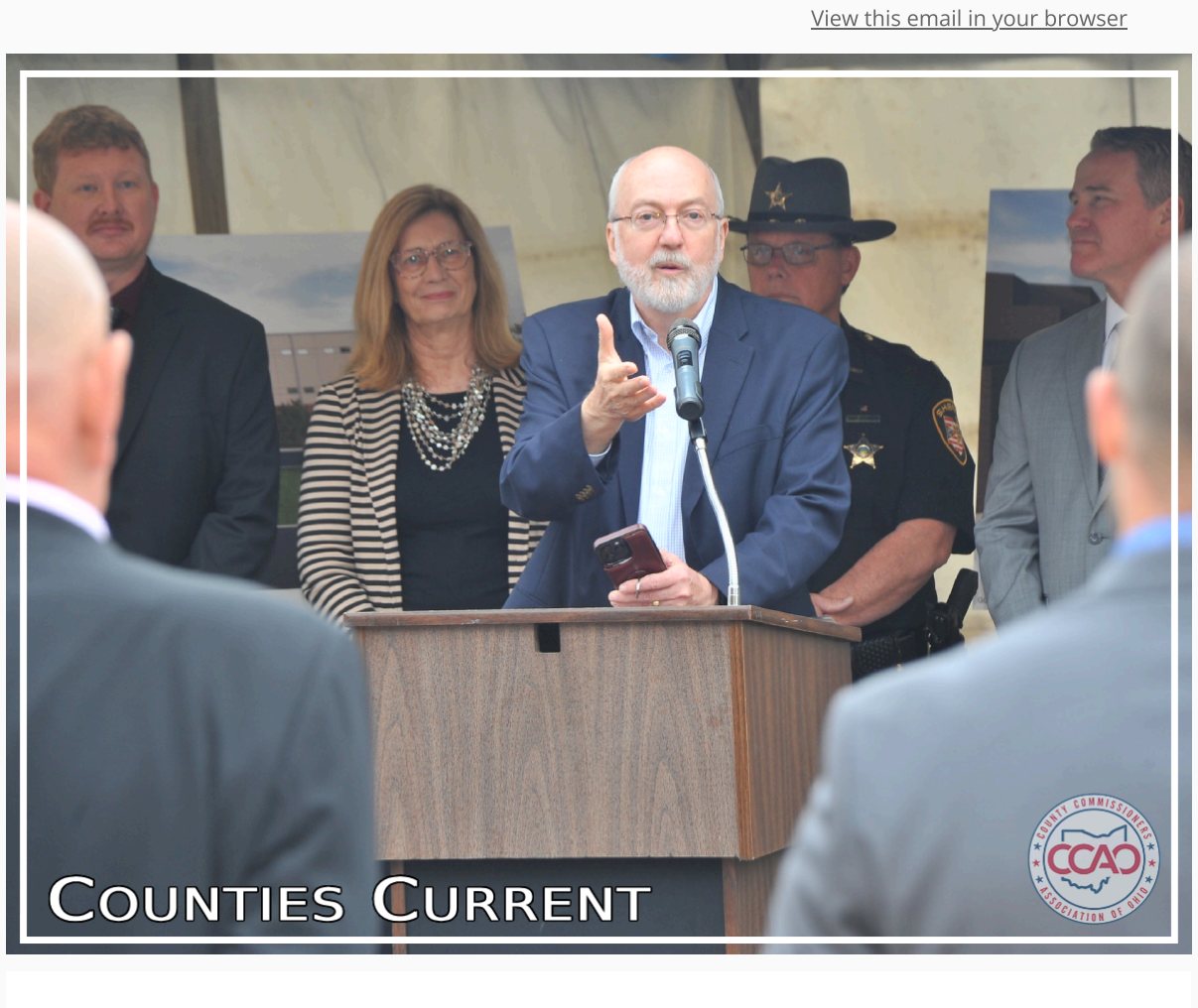
Counties Current
CCAO
County Commissioners Association of Ohio

May 6, 2024

CCAO Board of Directors Member and Wayne County Commissioner Ron Amstutz speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Wayne County Jail.

Fellow commissioners Jon Hofstetter (left) and Sue Smail (center-left), as well as Wayne County Sheriff Travis Hutchinson (center-right) and Lt. Governor Jon Husted (right) all partook in the ceremony.

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ASSOCIATION AND MEMBER NEWS

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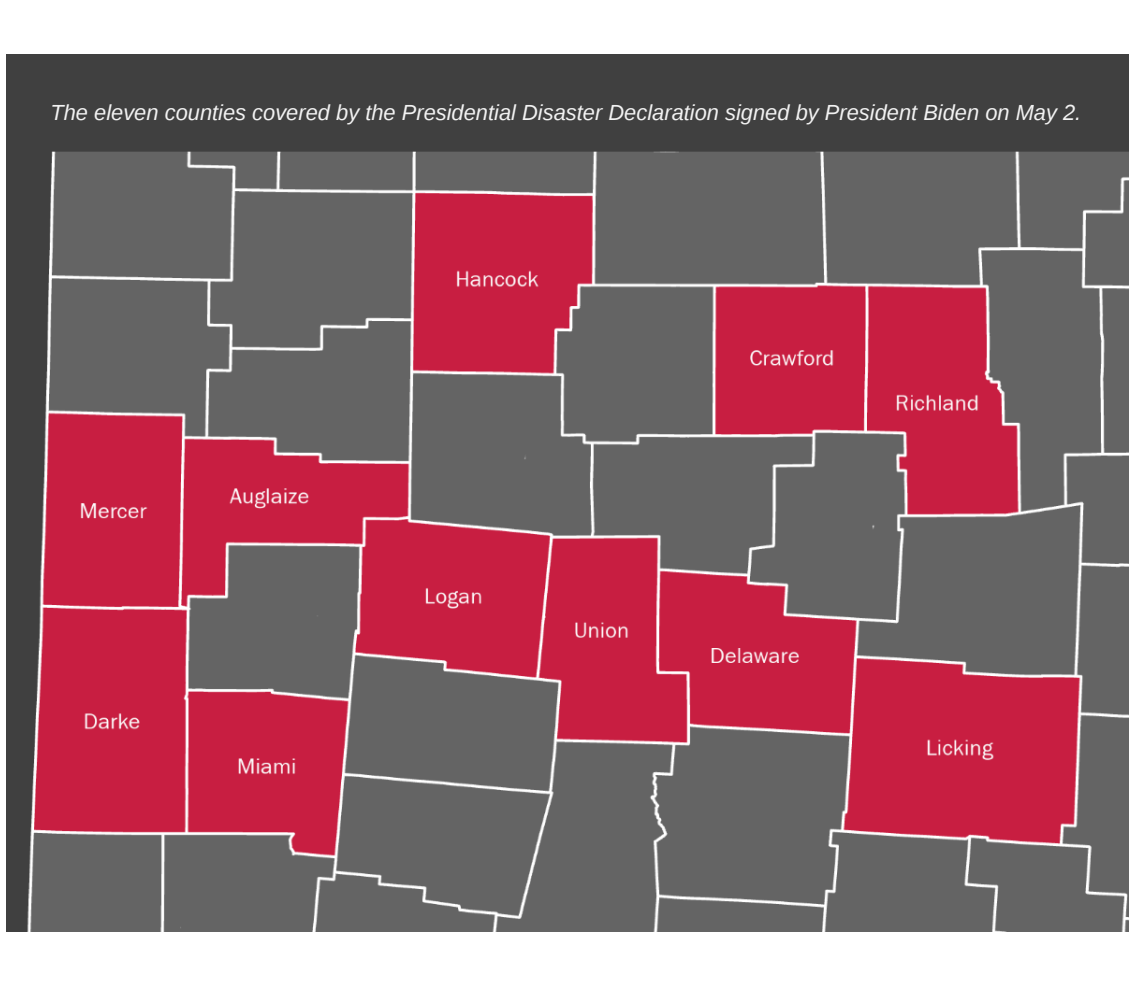
President Biden approves federal disaster declaration for tornado-struck counties

On Thursday, President Joe Biden signed a Presidential Disaster Declaration for the eleven counties affected by heavy tornado activity in March.

The federal declaration authorizes the FEMA Individual Assistance Program to begin providing grants for temporary housing and home repairs, rental assistance, and replacement of personal property. Additionally, the declaration allows the federal Small Business Administration to offer low-interest loans to cover uninsured property losses for homeowners, renters, and business owners.

Residents can apply for assistance by visiting DisasterAssistance.gov or by calling 800-621-FEMA.

The eleven counties covered by the Presidential Disaster Declaration signed by President Biden on May 2.



Swing for Scholarships: The County Classic Golf Outing

Step onto the lush greens of Safari Golf Club in Powell, Ohio, and immerse yourself in a day of swings, putts, and camaraderie for a noble cause. The second annual County Classic Golf Outing, organized by the CCAO Research and Educational Foundation, promises a day of fun-filled competition while supporting the dreams of aspiring students across Ohio.

Date: July 19th

Location: Safari Golf Club, Powell, Ohio

Time: Lunch and Registration at 11:30 a.m. | Shotgun Start at 1:00 p.m.

As the midsummer sun bathes the fairways in golden light, golf enthusiasts and philanthropists alike gather for a day that blends sport with purpose. The scent of freshly cut grass mingles with the aroma of a delicious lunch spread, setting the stage for an unforgettable event.

A Swing for a Cause:
The heartbeat of the County Classic Golf Outing is its dedication to the CCAO Research and Educational Foundation Scholarship fund. With every swing of the club, participants directly contribute to the future of promising students throughout Ohio. The Foundation's commitment to education shines bright as it awards five deserving students with $2,000 scholarships, empowering them to pursue their academic endeavors and shape tomorrow's leaders.

Unleash Your Inner Champion:
From seasoned pros to novice players, the County Classic welcomes golfers of all skill levels to join in the action-packed day. Whether you're aiming for the elusive hole-in-one or simply enjoying the scenic course, every participant plays a vital role in making a difference in students' lives.

Bonding Through Birdies:
Beyond the thrill of competition, the County Classic fosters connections that extend far beyond the greens. Amidst friendly banter and shared victories, participants forge lasting friendships, united by their passion for golf and their commitment to education.

Join Us:
Mark your calendars and prepare to tee off for a cause that transcends the game itself. The County Classic Golf Outing invites you to be a part of something truly special—a day where your love for golf merges seamlessly with your desire to support the next generation of leaders.

Register Today:
Secure your spot in this unforgettable event by registering early. Don't miss your chance to make a difference while enjoying a day of golf, laughter, and purpose at the County Classic.

For registrations visit: https://birdease.com/countyclassic

CCAO
County Commissioners Association of Ohio
Research & Educational Foundation
County Classic

Join CCAO for an afternoon of golf for a good cause!

County Classic Golf Outing
Safari Golf Club

4853 Powell Rd, Powell, OH 43065

July 19th, 2024
Lunch served/registration at 11:30am
Shotgun start at 1:00pm

In support of the CCAO Research and Education Foundation Scholarship Fund.

Helping develop the next generation of County Government.

Scan the code to sign up, or visit birdease.com/countyclassic

OSU Extension, CCAO conducting land use survey; 16 counties have not answered

OSU Extension is conducting a survey in collaboration with CCAO regarding county land use policies. The intent of the survey is to collect information about how counties utilize planning and land use tools such as zoning. ***Please note:*** It is helpful to complete the survey even if your county doesn't have county zoning, as it touches on other related areas such as utilities as well.

One of the end products of the survey will be a map visualizing county land use policies and other measures, such as renewable energy siting restricted areas. The map, along with a companion map that Extension is working on developing with the Ohio Township Association, will be useful to both community leaders and the private sector to be able to at-a-glance see land use policies across the state.

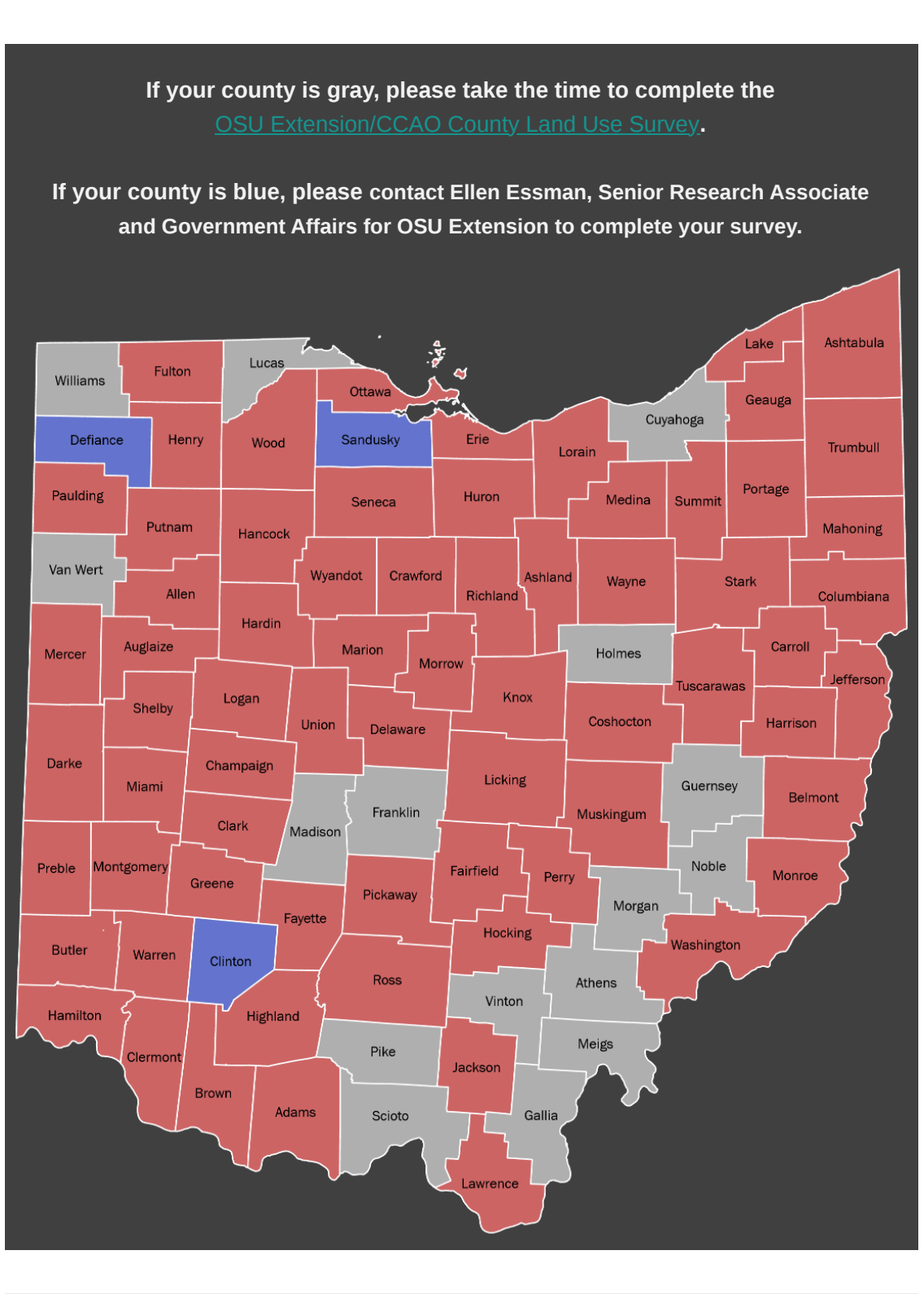
This project will be the most useful if we receive responses from every county. Thus far, Extension has received complete survey responses from 72 counties, incomplete responses from four counties, and is awaiting responses from the remaining 16 counties. If your county is shaded in gray in the map below, you have ***NOT YET*** provided a response to the survey. If your county is shaded in blue, your survey response is ***incomplete***.

Note: *In last week's issue of Counties Current, Tuscarawas County was erroneously marked as having an incomplete survey. CCAO apologizes for the error.*

Please work with the appropriate staff member to complete the survey for your county. If you have questions about the survey or need help completing it, please contact Ellen Essman, Senior Research Associate and Government Affairs for OSU Extension, at essman.23@osu.edu.

If your county is gray, please take the time to complete the OSU Extension/CCAO County Land Use Survey.

If your county is blue, please contact Ellen Essman, Senior Research Associate and Government Affairs for OSU Extension to complete your survey.



SAVE THE DATE! CCAO Summer Symposium in Hocking County

On August 21-23 (Wednesday to Friday), CCAO will host its annual Summer Symposium at the Hocking Hills Lodge and Conference Center in Hocking County!

The theme of the symposium is still being finalized, as are hotel arrangements. Watch for more information in future issues of *Counties Current* and through CCAO e-bulletins!

STATE AND FEDERAL NEWS

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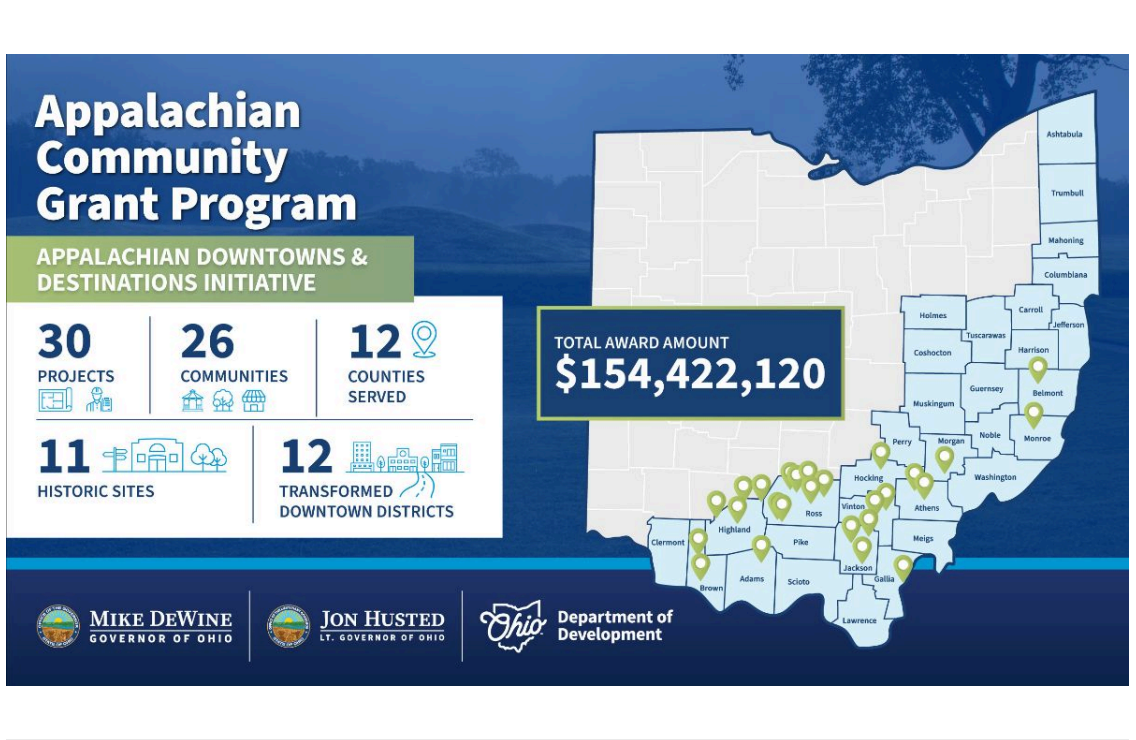
DeWine-Husted Administration awards $154 million in Appalachian Grant funding

Last Friday, Governor Mike DeWine, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, and Director of Development Lydia Mihalik announced 30 economic development grants through the Appalachian Downtowns and Destinations Initiative. The grants, totaling more than $154 million in investments, will help revitalize downtown districts, create new recreation opportunities, and amplifying cultural sites across 12 counties in Ohio's Appalachian region.

Among the historical/cultural sites that will receive funding are the Black Horse Inn Underground Railroad Museum in Morristown (Belmont County), the Serpent Mound (Adams County), and four Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks sites (Ross County) which are part of Ohio's recently designated UNESCO World Heritage site.

The funding for the awards comes from the Appalachian Community Grant Program, created in 2022 with a total investment of $500 million. About $200 million remains and are expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

A full list of the Downtowns and Destinations Grants is available here.


Appalachian Community Grant Program
Appalachian Downtowns & Destinations Initiative
30 Projects
26 Communities
12 Counties Served
11 Historic Sites
12 Transformed Downtown Districts
Total Award Amount
$154,422,120
Mike DeWine, Governor of Ohio
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor of Ohio
Ohio Department of Development

Auditor of State issues audit cost bulletin for SFY 2025

Last week, Auditor of State Keith Faber issued Bulletin 2024-004, which sets the hourly billing rates and allocation of audit costs for the upcoming state fiscal year (SFY) 2025 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025), with the hourly rates taking effect on July 14, 2024.

The audit billing rate for local governments will be $41/hour, a rate unchanged since October 2011.

The Auditor of State also provides additional services to local governments, such as financial reporting preparation, fiscal advisory services, consulting services, and others. These services are conducted by the office's Local Government Services (LGS) division.

Billing rates by the LGS vary based on the local government's total combined revenues, excluding revenue received from CARES and ARPA allocations. For counties, those with a total combined revenue of greater than $110 million will pay $85/hour, those between $55 million and $110 million will pay $75/hour, and those less than $55 million will pay $60/hour. These rates are unchanged since last year.

CCAO encourages members to familiarize themselves with the full bulletin before SFY 2025 begins.

Department of Health conducting Title V Block Grant public comment survey

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is seeking feedback on the Title V Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grant Program through a public comment survey. The survey, accessible here, will be open until May 30.

The program is intended to ensure the health and well-being of women, mothers, infants, children (including children with special healthcare needs), adolescents, and their families. Initiatives under Title V have been dedicated to improving maternal and child health through reducing infant mortality and improving coordinated care programs. You can read more about the successes that Title V has reached here.

ODH uses feedback from public comment surveys to help inform priorities and strategies through the five-year cycle of Title V block grants. Please share this comment link with maternal and child health stakeholders in your communities to ensure that the needs of your county are reflected in ODH's priorities.

If you have questions regarding the survey, please contact titlevmch@odh.ohio.gov.

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.

US Treasury Department to host webinars this week regarding new ARPA FAQs

The US Department of Treasury will host **recipient webinars on May 8 and 9, 2024** to explain revisions made to new FAQs related to the Obligation Interim Final Rule (IRF) for the ARPA State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (SLFRF) clarifications. Recipients are strongly encouraged to attend one of these two webinars; the same material will be presented on each date. Recipients may use the links below to register for a webinar:

You can register for the May 8 (10:00am to 11:30am) webinar here, or the May 9 (1:00pm to 2:30pm) webinar here.

As a reminder, **funds that are not obligated by December 31 must be returned to the US Treasury.**

CCAO Members with questions should contact Senior Policy Analyst Jon Honeck, jhoneck@ccao.org, 614-220-7982.

OEPA to host webinar on new solid waste rules

Next Thursday (May 16), the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency will host a webinar regarding updates to solid waste rules that were recently adopted by the agency.

The changes pertain to hazardous secondary material exclusions which allow some wastes that would normally be considered hazardous to be excluded when recycled.

The webinar will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and is free. Attendance can be used for one hour of Continuing Education Units for registered environmental health specialists or environmental health specialists in training.

State grant round-up

CCAO posts grant opportunities on its Grants and Funding Opportunities page. Below a few current state grant opportunities are highlighted.

Improving Juvenile Court Electronic Reporting

- **Eligibility**: Juvenile/Probate Courts
- **Purpose**: To facilitate electronic adjudication submissions from courts to the state Bureau of Criminal Investigation
- **Funding Available**: $750,000 total
- **Deadline**: May 15

Nature Works Grant Program

- **Eligibility**: Local Governments
- **Purpose**: To provide reimbursement assistance to local governments for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of recreational areas.
- **Funding Available**: Up to $150,000 per county
- **Deadline**: June 1

Benefits Bridge Employer Pilot Program

- **Eligibility**: Employers ***(NON-COUNTY)***
- **Purpose**: To provide funding to employers to offer training programs to participating employees who are recipients of public assistance programs to encourage the employees to take advantage of training programs.
- **Funding Available**: Up to $5,000 per enrolled employee, no more than $100,000 per employers
- **Deadline**: June 30

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, and on occasion other stories may be highlighted as well.

Northwest District

New Shelby County radio communications system activated

Sidney Daily News, April 30, 2024

The recently installed public safety radio communication system was activated during a ceremony at a tower on Gearhart Road near the Shelby County Sheriff's Office on Thursday. The ceremony capped off a multi-year project to modernize the county's communications infrastructure.

The construction and installation of the system cost $10.3 million. It replaces a 50-year-old system officials said was outdated. A maintenance fund of $5.5 million is expected to cover any work or repair for the next 20 years.

"The county did a good job of holding funds and reserving funds in order to make this happen," Shelby County Commissioner Tony Bornhorst said. "… It's been a great project, and it's exciting to see it come to fruition now."

Shelby County Sherriff Jim Frye thanked county officials for prioritizing the system, which Motorola Solutions representatives said has 99 percent on-the-street coverage throughout Shelby County. Motorola Solutions was chosen by county officials to install the system.

"We've been out there …when you're trying to point the radio at a tower, or you're a mile away from the tower, and you still can't talk," Frye said. "Thank you from the bottom of our hearts, because this is definitely about our safety."

Northeast District

Summit County launches free alert system to help protect against property record fraud

Cleveland.com, May 3, 2024

With title theft and deed fraud remaining a pervasive problem in the U.S., the Summit County Fiscal Office is offering a free automated email alert system to help county residents protect themselves against fraud, the office announced Thursday.

The email alert system, Property Record Alert, notifies property owners when any documents are recorded using their personal information, according to a news release. Property owners can then determine if the recordings are valid or possibly fraudulent.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 2023 Internet Crime Report, some 9,521 property owners and renters were victims of real estate fraud last year with losses totaling $145,243,348.

"While it doesn't happen often in Summit County, we have seen an uptick in title theft and deed fraud over the past couple of years," Fiscal Officer Kristen Scalise said in the release. "So as a proactive measure, I am proud to offer this free monitoring system to all Summit County property owners."

Residents can enroll in the service beginning May 13. To sign up, property owners should visit the self-service website and click on "Property Record Alert." Residents can customize their alerts based on first and last names or business names.

Central District

Environmental protections for Big Darby watershed may expand to five more Ohio counties

WOSU Public Media, April 29, 2024

The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency is considering expanding Big Darby watershed's protections in five central Ohio counties.

The Ohio EPA will explain the proposed updates and take public comments at a meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. Tuesday at Tolles Career Center, located at 7877 U.S. Highway 42 South in Plain City.

The Big Darby watershed is one of the most biologically diverse in the Midwest and is home to rare and endangered species, including northern riffleshell and clubshell freshwater mussels. Big and Little Darby creeks are both designated as state and national scenic waterways.

In Franklin County, the watershed is protected by the Big Darby Accords, which was signed by 10 local governments, including the cities of Columbus and Hilliard and Franklin County. The 2006 agreement sets forth preservation goals, promotes "responsible growth," and seeks to create responsible development in environmentally sensitive areas.

Now the Ohio EPA and Gov. Mike DeWine are calling for better preservation in Logan, Union, Champaign, Madison and Pickaway counties. Including Franklin County, the six counties account for the entire watershed.

Southwest District

Montgomery County unveils new $6M environmental lab

Dayton247Now, April 29, 2024

Montgomery County Environmental Services celebrated the opening of its new environmental laboratory on Monday, April 29.

Environmental Services Director Matt Hilliard says they had a location in Moraine in the 1970s.

The former building and equipment was outdated and costly repairs to the ventilation system were reasons for looking at a new location. The lab space is located on the ground floor of the county's administration building's parking garage and was previously used as child care.

Staff at this lab analyze water samples for its distribution system, as well as treated water from its wastewater treatment plants. Environmental Services provides services in water and sewer to about 225,000 people in Montgomery County.

"We have to serve clean drinking water, and this lab is part of that where we test samples daily, and then on the sewer side we treat all the waste water. We have two plants in the southern suburbs, West Carrollton and Kettering and we make sure the water we're put into the environment is clean and safe," said Hilliard.

Southeast District

'Light Ohio Blue' statewide campaign supports law enforcement

WTRF, May 2, 2024

Harrison County is lighting up blue to show their support for law enforcement.

During their regular meeting commissioners approved a resolution to light up the courthouse blue during the week of May 15th.

This is part of a state wide campaign called 'Light Ohio Blue' which honors law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty.

The campaign also honors current law enforcement personnel who protect our local communities.

Sheriff Joe Myers says it gives his department a sense of pride to see the community display their blue bulbs in support of them.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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

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MAY 6
CCAO / CEAO Southeast District Meeting (Harrison County)

MAY 15
CCAO Webinar: Summit County and UniteUS

MAY 16
CCAO General Government Committee

MAY 16
CCAO Executive Committee

MAY 17
CCAO Board of Directors Meeting

DID YOU KNOW?

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Butler County

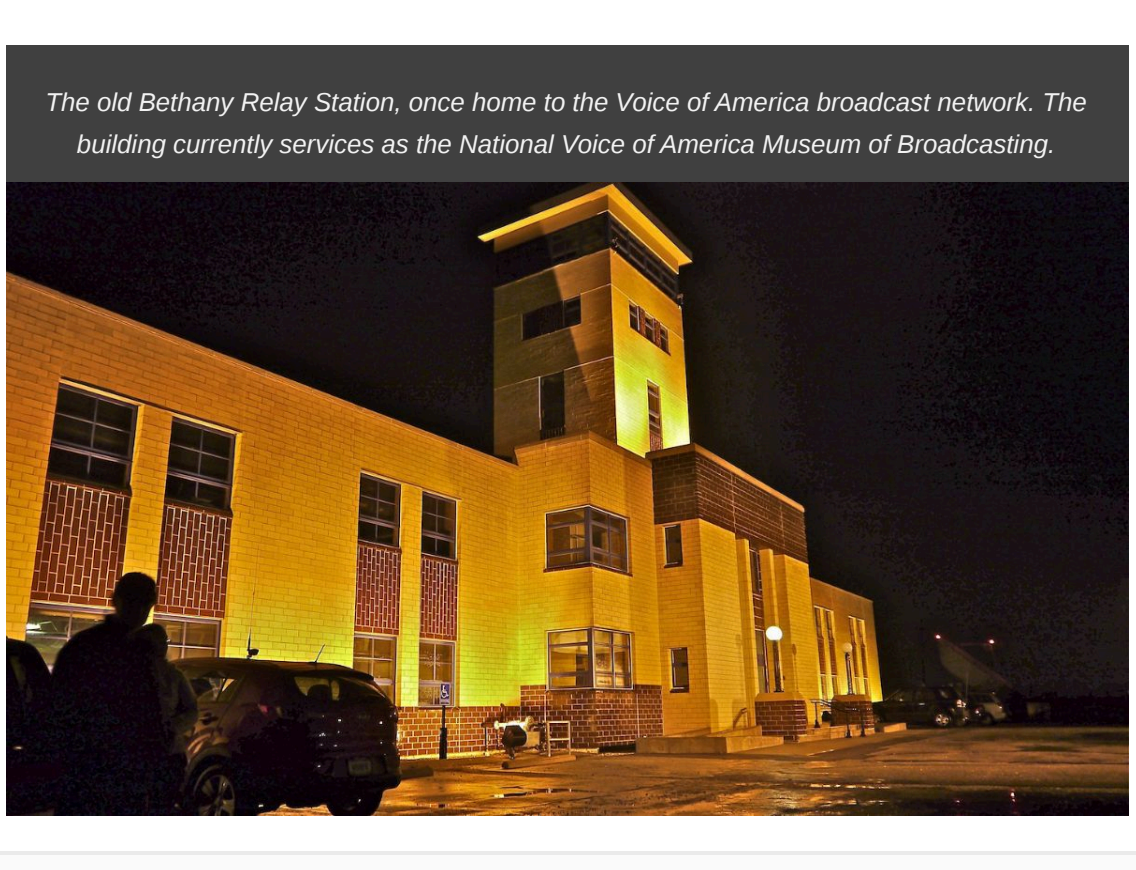
One of Butler County's 14 Metroparks is on the site of, and named after, a small but important part of the American war effort during World War II.

In the mid 1940s, engineers at the Crosley Broadcasting Corporation (based out of Cincinnati) designed short-wave radio transmitter that could deliver broadcasts nearly worldwide. On September 23, 1944, the station was dedicated as Voice of America Bethany Station and broadcast radio transmissions to Nazi Germany. The first broadcast began, "We shall speak to you about America and the war. The news may be good or it may be bad, but we will tell you the truth." It's alleged that Hitler once decried the station as "Cincinnati liars."

After the war, the station continued to broadcast around the world until 1994, when satellites supplanted antenna-based signals as the go-to method for radio transmissions. The transmission towers were dismantled and most of the land was transferred to local governments and became the Voice of America Metropark.

The core structure is currently the National Voice of America Museum of Broadcasting.

The old Bethany Relay Station, once home to the Voice of America broadcast network. The building currently services as the National Voice of America Museum of Broadcasting.



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