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from
Adams County

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

March 20, 2020

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County Manager Steve
Nevada

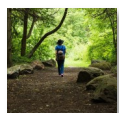
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Sorry
WE'RE
CLOSED

Message From Randy

When I hatched the idea of doing **TGIF** almost 9 years ago, I could have never envisioned putting out an issue, with the current content that follows in this issue resulting from a pandemic. Wow....how the world has changed in our neck of the woods in the past week! The only thing we can do is play the cards we are dealt, respond strategically, and re-prioritize what's important and smart. Beginning last Thursday, we have been coming together as a team to make decisions that have a far-reaching impact to our staff and community. The County and the Courts, along with our Directors, Staff, and Elected Officials, have answered the call admirably. Judge George and I described it as "keeping ahead of the wave." It was difficult and challenging to keep in front of that wave as the situation was changing by the hour and daily; but I think we did it without getting our feet and ankles too wet. We will continue to meet the challenges that lie ahead with your support and efforts!

At this time through at least April 6, Adams County buildings are closed to the public, except for essential services, emergency court proceedings or emergency filings. A majority of staff is in "work-at-home status." All departments remain operational during normal business hours by telephone or

VOTE

email. You may go to

www.adamscounty.us for a complete

listing of departments, phone number and

email. At next Wednesday's Commissioners Meeting, The Adams

County Board of Commissioners will be officially joining other counties in asking the

Department of State and the Governor to postpone the April 23 Primary Election and consider a mail-in

Primary. With the Primary only 5 weeks away, this would reduce personal exposure to all of our residents, give the

Elections Office more time to respond to the massive amount of mail-in ballots that will be generated, and off-set the anticipated withdrawal of older poll workers concerned about exposure.

I echo County Manager Steve Nevada's advice and comments below. Notice his comment heading for this issue went from *How Bout Them Apples* normally, to *Our Valued Staff*! Certainly, an appropriate and valid transition. While we are focused on COVID-19 and all the ramifications, other serious medical issues still exist in our community. There is a serious need for blood donations. There is no additional risk for donating blood. If you are looking to somehow contribute to our community during this difficult period, consider being a blood donor. You will walk away feeling more positive! I heard a phrase this morning that I believe is poignant. *In separation we are together*. Just because we are not in proximity, does not mean we cannot support one another physically, mentally and emotionally. Check-in on your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Give them a call, text, email or bring them something from the store. Give thanks to our medical community, first responders and essential service personnel. Take this threat seriously and follow precaution guidelines. Remember that rest can bolster your immune system while drugs, alcohol and tobacco products can decrease it. It is an honor to serve and protect the residents of Adams County, and we take that responsibility very seriously. On behalf of Jim, Marty and myself- let's look out for each other and stay well! Randy

To Our Valued Staff From County Manager Steve Nevada

The response to COVID-19 has impacted the lives of all staff, and I want to thank everyone for their dedication, empathy, understanding, and care. Our priority – now and always – is the health and safety of our employees and our community. My profound gratitude is with those on the front lines addressing this public health emergency. I'd like to recognize all staff for their quick response to ever changing expectations. Due to each staff's quick understanding response to ever changing circumstances, we have been able to take steps to limit exposure to the virus. We have limited public visitors to essential mandated operations and public health safety functions. We have suspended travel, conferences and meetings, provided remote-work solutions, provided additional cleaning to buildings and continue to reinforce safe health practices in every setting.


We are taking every precaution to ensure the safety and health of our communities and we need your continued help. As a reminder it is important that you continue to practice healthy habits:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
 - Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
 - Practice social distancing.
 - Cover your nose or mouth with a tissue or your elbow — not your hand — and discard the tissue immediately after.
 - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using proper cleaning spray or wipe.
 - Get adequate sleep and eat well-balanced meals to ensure a healthy immune system.
- Connect with family and friends for support utilizing technology like video chat in order to maintain social distancing.

If you're looking for trusted, up-to-date information, I recommend visiting the specific coronavirus websites of the CDC and the PA Department of Health.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>





[https://
www.health.pa.gov/topics/
disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx](https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx)

Thanks for your continued support in this challenging time. Stay safe and well! Steve

Message From Dept of Emergency Services

The Adams County Department of Emergency Services (ACDES) continues to function during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 911 Center is fully staffed and functioning under normal conditions, and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) has been at a Level III activation since late last week. Level III EOC activation means that the Emergency Management (EM) Staff is maintaining situational awareness, communicating with various state and federal agencies (FEMA, PEMA, PaDOH, PennDOT, etc.), and working to support our local first responders (LE, Fire, and EMS). Director Bladen is in contact with the Director of PEMA's Central Office daily; and has been in contact with the Director of PEMA, Randy Padfield. They have indicated that PEMA is prepared to provide support to Adams County as we face this crisis. Requests have been submitted for additional personal protective equipment (PPE) for our first responders; and, we are hopeful that we receive additional supplies from our state and federal partners in the very near future. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and professional staff here at ACDES; the 911 Telecommunicators report to work prepared to answer the needs of the residents and visitors of Adams County; and the EM Staff continues, on a 24 hour basis, to monitor the situation and plan to address the unmet needs of our 34 municipalities. For information on the Coronavirus, go to www.health.pa.gov. Adams County, we will get through this.

Message From Adams County Veterans Affairs

Your Adams County Veterans Affairs office is here to serve our Veterans. Although the Court House is closed to the public - except for certain emergency functions – the Veterans Affairs Department is operating as usual except for not having personal face-to-face appointments. Even though there are no office appointments – we are able to receive telephone calls and e-mails. We can and will process paperwork electronically and through the U. S. Mail. If you call and no one answers, please leave a message and your call will be returned promptly. If you e-mail, we will respond promptly. We continue to monitor all open claims as we always do and if we see that the VA is requesting additional information for your claim, we will call and let you know. In other words, although we have been thrown a curve with this COVID-19 virus, Todd and I continue to be totally committed to seeing that our Veterans needs are met and will continue to do so until things return to normal. Thank-you for your patience, understanding and cooperation.

Stan Clark

Message From Adams County Planning

The Adams County Office of Planning and Development, including the Conservation District, remains operational during these unusual circumstances. As we do our part to lessen the spread of the Coronavirus, the office is currently closed to the public. However, all staff are working remotely and are available to answer any questions you may have regarding any of the programs that we administer. Staff are employing the use of conference calling, web conferencing, email and other technologies to facilitate meetings and other interactions so that the offices remain as functional as possible. Subdivision and Land Development Plans should be submitted electronically. Instructions can be found on the Planning web page and staff can assist you by telephone. Also, items may be mailed or dropped off at the Ag Center. Instructions are posted on the front door. Materials will be forwarded to the appropriate individuals on a regular basis. Questions should

be directed to the Adams County Office of Planning and Development at 717-337-9824 and the Adams County Conservation District at 717-334-0636. Messages will be forwarded to the appropriate individuals and you will be contacted as soon as possible to have your questions answered. Where possible, if you have the email address for the person you wish to contact, please utilize that. The web pages for the Planning Office and the Conservation District are also a great resource for information you may be seeking. The links for those two pages are as follows: Planning and Development Homepage <http://www.adamscounty.us/Dept/Planning/Pages/default.aspx> Conservation District Homepage <http://www.adamscounty.us/Dept/Conservation/Pages/default.aspx> We are striving to do our best to provide services to you as normal. We thank you for your cooperation. May you all stay well and stay safe.

Message From Human Resources

HR wants to reassure employees that all necessary functions of our office (payroll, benefits, etc.) will continue. Several members of your HR team are working from home and are staying in contact with department heads. Please, follow social distancing and CDC guidelines. This is no joke. We want to see ALL of you when this crisis is over. It's safe to say most people are feeling concerned as our daily routines at work and home are turned upside down. This is normal. However, if you or anyone in your household is feeling overly anxious, please don't hesitate to contact the Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-543-5080. This line is open 24 hours a day. It can really help to talk to someone about your concerns and fears.

Also, if any of our older employees find themselves needing food or medicine and are scared to go out or simply can't, please contact Michele Miller, HR Director at 717-680-7000. She will do her best to line up someone to get these items for you and drop them off at a safe distance at your home. Please, speak up. Your need can't be met if we don't know about it. We are all in this together and will get through it together.

To our 911 and prison teams, how can we thank you enough? You are critical and essential personnel who continue to make our community safer by doing what you do. Your dedication and service do not go unnoticed. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Message From IT

During this pandemic, the Information Technology Department has been tasked with playing a key role in shifting most departments to a telecommuting position. The majority of operations that can work remotely are leveraging existing technology that the County already has in place. This includes laptops, tablets, mobile Wi-Fi, cell phones, and traditional phone service. Additional mobile resources have been ordered and will be distributed to departments in the coming weeks to solidify any remaining technological gaps that departments are experiencing. The overall goal of the IT department during this time is to provide service, solutions, and support to all departments to ensure each department can meet their mission and obligations to the public. At this time, the IT department is highly satisfied with the entire organizations connected status and will continue to find creative solutions to keep key business functions up and running. If departments are experiencing any issues, please contact the IT helpdesk during normal business hours. During non-business hours, please leverage the IT Departments afterhours procedures which can be found on the County intranet under IT.

A photograph of a person walking away on a dirt path through a forest. The path is lined with large rocks and trees, and the sunlight filters through the leaves.

The **End**

Thinking about this heading the past 9 years, The End, of my concluding normal potpourri of thoughts, events, information and puppy reports, made me pause - and then grin about changing it for this issue. This is a challenge that will no doubt affect our normal life for the foreseeable future, and result in some illness and even death. But it will pass. Will it leave some carnage in its wake - yes. As a community we will engage, adapt, overcome and persevere.

Since there are not many events to report, might I suggest you take the time to slow down and use this opportunity to enjoy the beautiful vistas, walking trails and National Park outdoor opportunities that we have in Adams County. Don't just sit in front of the TV and watch the grim news. When you become stare crazy in your house, think about an outdoor activity with minimal risk of exposure. No matter what you do get out there and "safely enjoy" all the historical, recreational, agricultural, natural and cultural opportunities we have in Adams County. Stay well!