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from  
*Adams County*

written by: Commissioner Randy Phiel

August 16, 2019

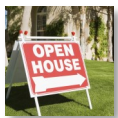
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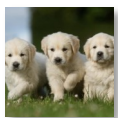
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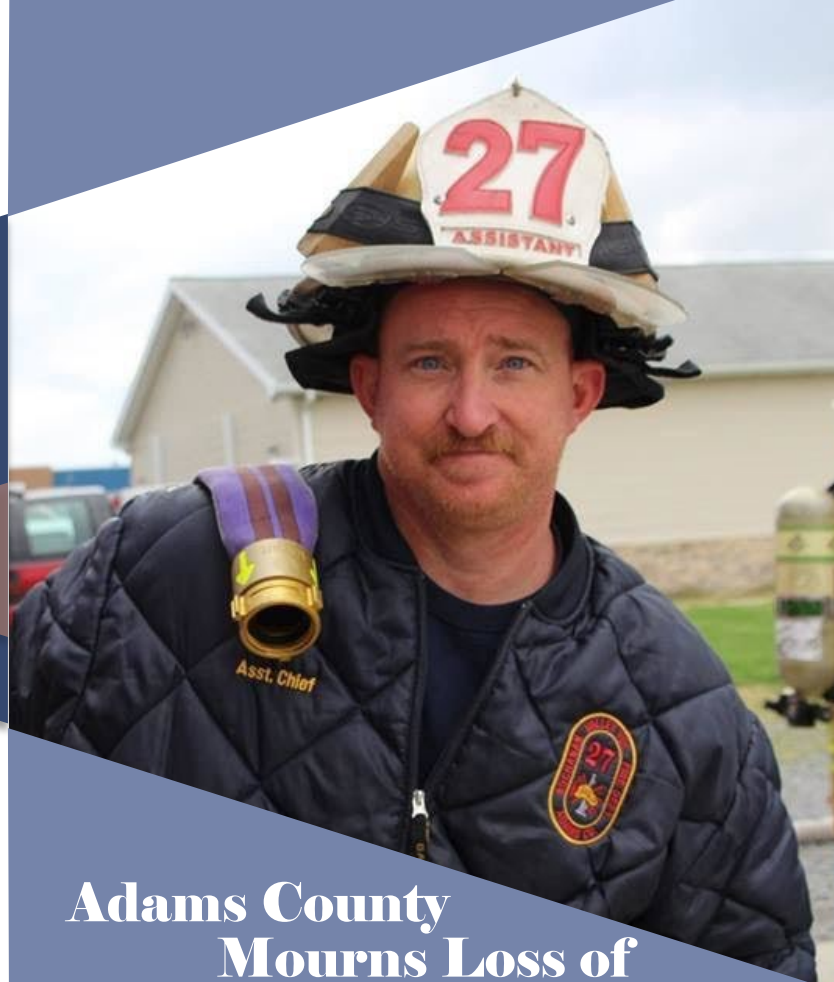


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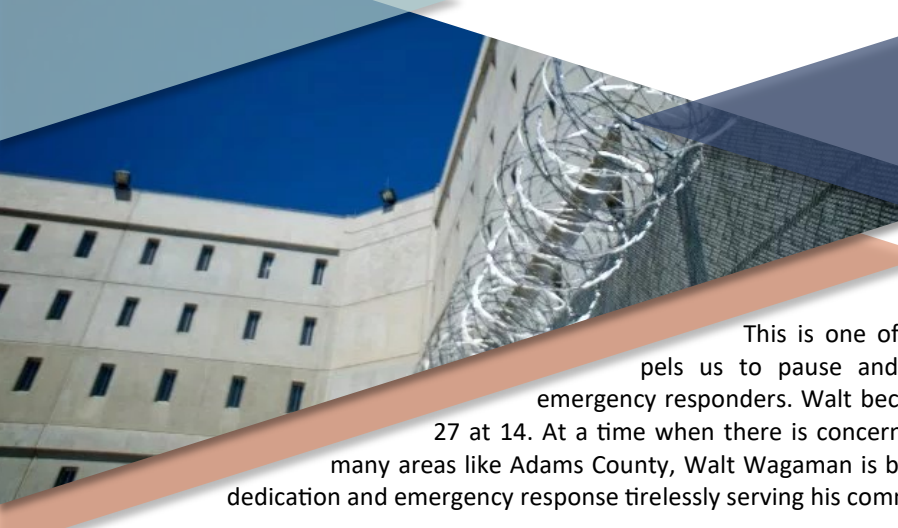
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## Adams County Mourns Loss of *Emergency Responder*

Too many times we take for granted our emergency responders as they pass us responding to a call. When we have an accident, injury, illness or calamity in our lives we are very fortunate in Adams County to have emergency response quickly on the scene. Sometimes it takes a personal incident or a traumatic incident to bring into focus the risks these responders take every time they walk out the door responding to assist in our community.

Unfortunately, such an incident occurred when Buchanan Valley FD Assistant Chief Walt Wagaman was responding to a vehicle accident while on standby for Bendersville FD. Assistant Chief Wagaman was ejected from the fire truck when it made a left hand turn. Wagaman was flown from the scene and later succumbed to his serious injuries at York Hospital. Walt was 46 and was a 32-year member of the department. Walt's memorial service will take place at Gettysburg High School on Sunday with viewing from 2-4 and the service at 4PM.



This is one of those times that compels us to pause and further appreciate our emergency responders. Walt became a junior member of Company 27 at 14. At a time when there is concern about the future of emergency services in many areas like Adams County, Walt Wagaman is both an example and a beacon of life-long community dedication and emergency response tirelessly serving his community.

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## **Adams County Welcomes New Security Director**

With the July retirement of long-time Adams County Security Director Mike Baltzley, the Security Board in conjunction with HR engaged in the announcement and search process for a new security director. The Adams County Board of Commissioners and the Security Board is pleased to announce Adams County Sheriff's Deputy Sergeant Mark Masemer was selected for the position. Congratulations Mark! We look forward to working with you to keep Adams County facilitates a safe place to work and visit.

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## **Huntington State Prison Program Tour**

Recently Adams County representatives from Adult Probation, Planning, Conservation District, Penn State Extension, and the Adult Correctional Complex joined Commissioner Qually on tours of the Huntington State Correctional Institution and Penn Nursery to learn about potential new programming at the Adams County Prison. The tour was to begin preliminary research on the feasibility of adding a jail nursery to our facility, where inmates would learn practical horticultural skills that could serve them in the future and assist our local community. The State prison in Huntington showcased a program where inmates learned the value of planting riparian buffers along impaired waterways in an effort to improve water quality. Penn Nursery gave county staff very practical information about how we could create a small nursery facility on county property. While this project is still in the early stages of research, partnerships with Penn State Extension and the Conservation District show promise. The next step is to look into state and federal funding sources. We will keep you posted on progress.

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## **Adams County Agriculture Business Tour**

The Adams County Farm Bureau, AgChoice Farm Credit and the Adams County Young Farmers Assoc. recently sponsored a tour of agriculturally related businesses in our area. All 3 commissioners joined the tour of Zeigler Brothers, Inc., Quality Greenhouses, and Rice Fruit Company. This was definitely a diverse combination of business/ag operations.

Zeigler Brothers provided us with a media orientation of their history and their unique world-wide market for animal feed products. They do business in 50 countries and have evolved into one of the largest aquatic feed producers in the world. Touring their production plant in East Berlin we were introduced to their process that ensures that each granule of feed (no matter the size) contains the required nutritional elements. When possible, most ingredients such as wheat are purchased from area farms.

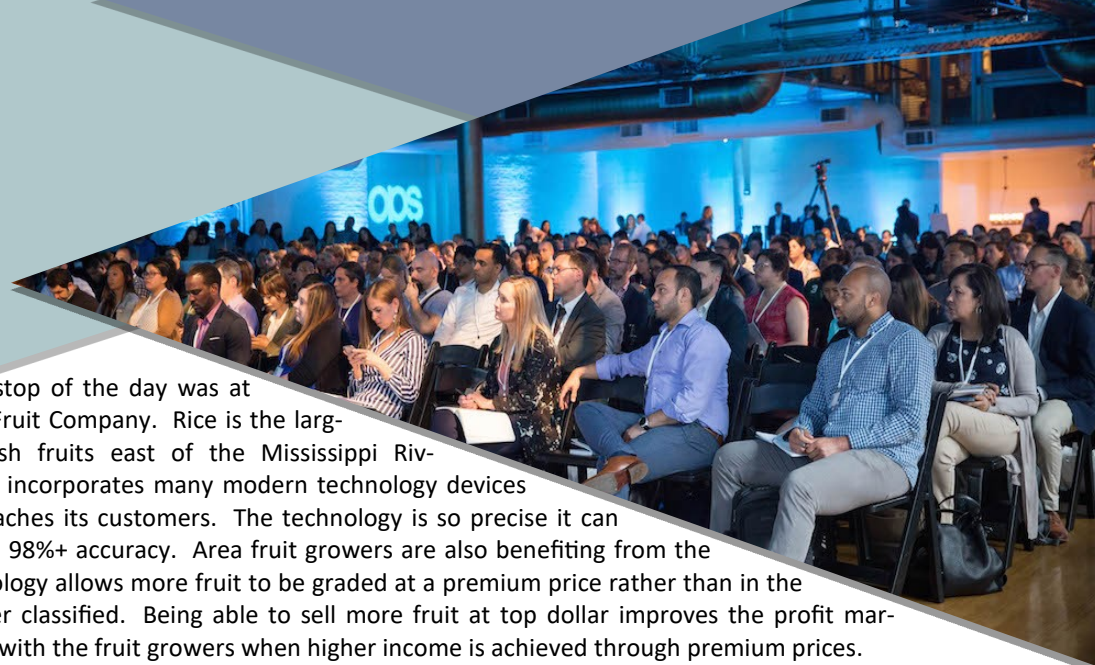
Next, we visited Quality Greenhouses, located between York Springs and Dillsburg. It is an awesome greenhouse operation producing a wide variety of annual and perennial plants. Quality Greenhouses is a wholesale operation that delivers to garden center customers within a 200 mile radius of the operation. The operation is continuing to expand beyond the 25 acres presently in greenhouses. Their expansion will reach into Latimore Township, Adams County.

They employ approximately 50 full-time staff and during peak spring operation they employ 255 people. Quality Greenhouse provides housing for their migrant employees, with many returning yearly through the H2A program.

The final







stop of the day was at the Rice Fruit Company. Rice is the largest packer of fresh fruits east of the Mississippi River. Their packing operation incorporates many modern technology devices to ensure that prime quality fruit reaches its customers. The technology is so precise it can predict interior fruit imperfections with 98%+ accuracy. Area fruit growers are also benefiting from the upgraded optic technology. This technology allows more fruit to be graded at a premium price rather than in the past when premium grades went under classified. Being able to sell more fruit at top dollar improves the profit margin. Rice shares these increased profits with the fruit growers when higher income is achieved through premium prices.

Also, Rice is dedicated to preventing work related injuries. Every two hours employees rotate job assignments to reduce injuries caused by repetitious strain. In addition, Rice is now installing robotics to eliminate the manual lifting and stacking of boxed fruit on to shipping pallets. Not only will this reduce injuries and maintain employment levels, but it will improve production levels. We also saw roof top vegetation and solar that combine to maximize energy savings and benefits.

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## 2019 CCAP Summer Conference Berks County

Commissioners Martin, Qually and myself returned last week from the County Commissioners Association of Pennsylvania Summer Conference in Berks County. Besides attending various seminars related to county business, worthy of note is that the CCAP membership voted to return to Adams County in 2024 for the CCAP Summer Conference after having been here just last summer. That is somewhat unusual and a tribute to what we have to offer in Adams County. Attendance last summer in Adams County broke the CCAP summer conference attendance record and is a great economic and marketing tool.

Besides electing a new slate of CCAP officers, I was honored to be re-elected as the Region III CCAP Board Representative. Region III is comprised of Adams, Franklin, Fulton, Bedford, Somerset, Huntington, Juanita, Mifflin, Blair & Perry county's. The search and interviews for a replacement for long-time CCAP Executive Director Doug Hill have been completed. This is a critical position to represent the interests of Pennsylvania counties. I was part of the Board Recruitment & Interview Team that began this process six months ago with over 160 applications. The entire CCAP Board of Directors interviewed the final two candidates during the conference and I anticipate the new CCAP Executive Director will be announced very soon. It is anticipated the new Executive Director will work with Mr. Hill until his retirement at the end of the year.

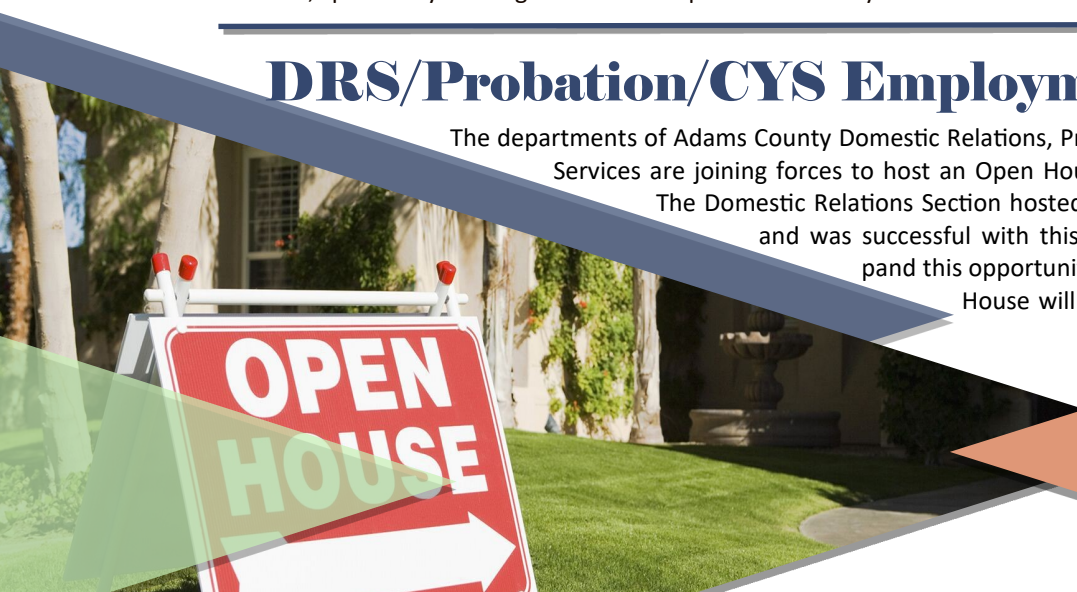
As we know the Spotted Laternfly is knocking on the door of Adams County. An unintended lesson at the CCAP Summer Conference is that the Adams County Commissioners got to see up close and personal the well documented infestation of the Spotted Laternfly in Berks County. Even in downtown Reading the pests were everywhere on sidewalks, windows and cars. As part of the Farm Bill that is mentioned in more depth at the end of this TGIF issue, Act 35, creates the Agriculture Rapid Response Disaster Readiness Account, specifically funding dedicated to Spotted Lanternfly control efforts.

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## DRS/Probation/CYS Employment Open House

The departments of Adams County Domestic Relations, Probation Services and Children and Youth Services are joining forces to host an Open House to help families secure employment.

The Domestic Relations Section hosted a similar Open House on June 11, 2019 and was successful with this event and therefore we wanted to expand this opportunity to our partner agencies. The Open House will be held on September 16,



2019 from 8:30 to 2:00 and will have various employers, employment agencies, Harrisburg Community College, Career Link, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Lincoln Intermediate Unit, PA Commuter Services and many more. Please feel free to stop out and meet representatives from the agencies that our departments work so closely with to assist the families we serve. If you have any questions please feel free to contact any of the Department Directors. A shout out to all three departments for this proactive initiative!

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## Pennsylvania Farm Bill Into Law

Along with adoption of the final FY 2019-2020 state budget, a 13-bill package was enacted to provide more than \$24 million to support the state's agriculture industry. County-related elements of the package, known as the *Pennsylvania Farm Bill*, will help to assure state and local investments to preserve valuable farmland will be carried forward in the future, and will take steps to protect water quality and mitigate the impacts of invasive species such as the spotted Lanternfly.

While almost 5,500 farms in Pennsylvania, encompassing nearly 563,000 acres, have been preserved since the farmland preservation program began in 1989, a new generation of farmers must maintain this investment and keep these lands in active production. To that end, Act 40 creates an Agricultural Business Development Center to provide resources to farmers, with a particular focus on owners of preserved farms.

In addition, it amends the Agricultural Area Security Law to allow for consistency of definitions for preserved farms, while the omnibus amendments to the Tax Reform Code in Act 13 included incentives for the transfer of preserved farms to qualified beginning farmers by offering a realty transfer tax exemption.



*The* **End**

Many of you dog lovers have been asking me for a puppy update and here it is! This weekend our new 8-week Golden Retriever pup "*Bailey*" becomes part of the Phiel Family. We were fortunate to have found a local family who have raised, bred and shown English Golden's for 40 years. English Golden's are lighter in color than the reddish ones most of us are used to and that I had before. We obtained second pick of the (4) females before they were born, visited the litter at 3 weeks, picked our girl at 6 weeks, and will bring her home tomorrow at 8 weeks. There is no doubt there will be some separation anxiety, potty training accidents, a lot of walks and sleep deprived nights for a few months, so if you see me walking around the building bleary eyed you probably know why. A new pup and another new granddaughter all within 4 weeks. With (2) two-year old granddaughters already on the scene - there will be no lack of activity at our house.

There is plenty to do in Adams County this weekend. The internationally acclaimed *Gettysburg Bluegrass Festival* is at Granite Hill Campground kicked off Thursday for four days. Celebrate our harvest bounty from farms and orchards all over Adams County through this weekend on menus at participating restaurants during *Bounty Of The County*. The annual *Gettysburg Brewfest* takes place on Saturday at the Lutheran Seminary west lawn beside my house. I will be stationed comfortably on my porch watching the activity as my children's adult friends come and go. The Littlestown Area Garden Club is holding its annual *Plant Sale* during *Littlestown Good Ole Days Celebration* this Saturday at Crouse Park in Littlestown. Oyler's Organic Farm & Market is having their *7TH Organic Summer Harvest Dinner* on Saturday at 5PM. Enjoy a buffet of locally grown culinary delights. The *Gettysburg Wine & Music Festival* at the Gateway Complex is coming at you on September 7 & 8. Sample the wines from 12-6 for \$20.

There is so much to do and see in Adams County. No matter what you do, get out there and experience all the Historical, Recreational, Agricultural, Natural and Cultural opportunities that beautiful Adams County has to offer!