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Food Summit Announces New Awards

The 9th annual Montgomery County Food Summit was held on Nov. 20, bringing together more than 300 people to learn about the brand new Food Equity Plan. This action plan, created by the Montgomery County Food Equity Coalition, seeks to reduce hunger and improve access to healthy food through six focus areas: Food Insecurity, Strong Communities, Vibrant Farms, Healthy People, Sustainable Ecosystems, and Thriving Local Economies.

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**New Therapy Dog Program Offered to Inmates**

Through a partnership with the Miami Valley Pet Therapy Association (MVPTA), Montgomery County Sheriff Rob Streck hopes to provide an innovative service to inmates that helps ease feelings of anxiety, depression and anger, as they navigate through the court system.

“While these programs are often heavily promoted in the prison systems, they are far less common in county jails. This program is a means of supporting emotional wellness, and we are looking forward to more positive outcomes,” said Sheriff Rob Streck.

Montgomery County Jail Treatment Coordinator Teresa Russell has worked to design a true therapeutic program with support from the onsite medical and mental health providers. The program focuses on socialization and encouragement, giving inmates the opportunity to meet with the dogs and their handlers through both group and one-on-one sessions, often learning and relating to how these animals have survived emotional and physical traumas.

The therapy dogs of MVPTA are also used outside of the jail, even working alongside deputies to provide emotional support to victims of the Memorial Day tornadoes.

The handlers and dogs are certified by their MVPTA. Handlers volunteer for the program, so it comes at no cost to the Sheriff’s Office.

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**Dr. Kathryn Storm Joins the ARC**

Montgomery County’s Animal Resource Center welcomed Dr. Kathryn Storm to the team in August as their new Director of Veterinary Medicine. Always up for a challenge, Dr. Storm says that working in shelter medicine is her dream job and she loves that no two days are the same.

Under her guidance, the clinic and its staff are hard at work treating animals in our care and making sure they’re ready to go to their new homes. Welcome to Montgomery County, Dr. Storm!
This year’s Food Summit also featured the inaugural Food Champion Awards, naming the following winners:

- Neah Rainey, Nourishing Spirit Award
- Nicole Adkins, People’s Choice Award
- Glenna Jennings, Educator Award
- The Foodbank, Inc., Community Partner Award

Thank you to our event co-hosts for their leadership on this important issue: County Commissioner Judy Dodge, Health Commissioner Jeff Cooper, Former U.S. Ambassador Tony P. Hall, and City of Dayton Commissioners Chris Shaw and Matt Joseph.

DRG Hosts 3rd Annual Bring Your Green Challenge

Dayton Regional Green kicked off the annual Bring Your Green Challenge at a press conference on Oct. 9 at Cox Arboretum. The Bring Your Green Challenge is a friendly competition open to all area green-certified businesses, schools, and government agencies.

Challenge participants compete to save energy and resources throughout the year, while receiving free tracking tools and learning experiences along the way. Finalists are eligible for cash prizes.

DRG awards Green Business Certifications throughout the year, with more than 725 businesses certified to date.

The first two Bring Your Green Challenges prevented the release of over 12.5 million tons of CO₂ into the atmosphere. To follow this year’s challenge, visit bringyourgreen.com for updates.

Protect Your Furry Friend with a Dog License

Make sure to get your 2020 dog license, on sale now through Jan. 31, 2020.

Licensing your dog is an excellent way to protect your pet. A dog license provides legal proof of ownership and helps distinguish a stray dog from an owned dog. A dog license can also be traced 24 hours a day, 365 days a year through the Montgomery County Auditor.

Revenue from dog licensing is a major source of funding for the Animal Resource Center, helping fund our foster and adoption programs to place animals in loving homes throughout the community.

Licenses can be purchased at the Auditor’s Office, various outposts throughout the county, and online at www.mcohio.org/dogs.
Montgomery County Juvenile Court CASA Program Receives Grant for Youth Impacted by Opioid Crisis

Judges Anthony Capizzi and Helen Wallace announced Sept. 30 that the Montgomery County Juvenile Court CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) Program was awarded a $50,000 mentoring grant from the National CASA Association.

Work done under the mentoring grant will target opioid-impacted youth.

2020 Environmental Calendar Contest Encourages Creativity and Supports Local Schools

Montgomery County students in grades K-12 were encouraged to submit original artwork that supports a water conservation or “recycle right” theme for the 2020 Environmental Calendar Contest.

Funds will be used to recruit, train and assign new volunteers to represent the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect resulting from a guardian using opioids.

Volunteers will also mentor youth, helping them increase their level of connectivity with community and family, improve educational outcomes, and reach stable placements.

The federal grant funds distributed through National CASA/GAL are provided by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, US Department of Justice, as authorized under the Victims of Child Abuse Act of 1990.

Environmental Services received more than 400 submissions, which were scored by volunteers from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base.

Thanks to sponsors from 21 local organizations, $10,000 in prize money was awarded to Montgomery County schools. County Commissioners Debbie Lieberman, Judy Dodge, and Carolyn Rice presented the funds at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds on Nov. 13.

Each student winner received a plaque and their respective school was awarded a presentation check. Schools with month winners received $500 each and those with honorable mentions received $250 each. Kettering Fairmont High School received the highest award of $2,500 for its students’ cover-page prize.

The winning artwork created by Charlie Roy, an 11th grade student at Kettering Fairmont High School
Male Leadership Academy Mentoring Program Kicks Off

Montgomery County has a new youth initiative, aimed at giving young men a positive male role model. The Male Leadership Academy held its kickoff dinner on Oct. 16, bringing in the inaugural group of mentors and mentees.

The Male Leadership Academy will serve youth ages 14-16. Each participant is paired with a mentor to provide guidance and help develop character, soft skills and leadership skills. With this guidance, these young men will progress into the next stage of their lives with confidence.

At the dinner, Montgomery County Commissioners Debbie Lieberman, Judy Dodge, and Carolyn Rice, as well as County Administrator Michael Colbert, spoke on the importance of having a strong mentor.

On Nov. 5, the participants had their first group outing with their mentors, with a reception followed by a show at the Schuster Center. Ken Marcus and Wil B., the duo known together as Black Violin, even met with the group before their show during a special reception.

Nearly 300 employees from across the county showed up at The Job Center for this drone photo shoot to promote Child Support Awareness Month in August. Almost all of them wore green, the awareness color designated for the month. It was a great show of support for our Montgomery County Child Support staff, who handle over 50,000 cases to ensure the well-being of area children. This photo won the “Most Collaborative Award” in the Ohio Child Support Directors’ Association annual photo contest.
Montgomery County has been recognized by Springbuk® as one of the Healthiest 100 Workplaces in America. Each of the winning companies is considered an exemplary leader for the effectiveness of their health and well-being initiatives.

Over 1,000 of America’s top well-being programs were evaluated for this award across the country. This year’s winners span nearly every industry, size, geography and include both privately-held and publicly-traded organizations. For the full list of the national award winners, visit this link.

Montgomery County provides a comprehensive wellness program to support employees and spouses in mind, body and spirit while encouraging personal accountability for self-care. The County offers several innovative opportunities, including disease management programs, personal and online coaching, biometric screenings, health assessments, diabetes prevention and diabetes awareness initiatives, tobacco cessation classes, mobile mammography events, meditation, and on-site classes.
New Location for the Nicholas Residential Treatment Facility

On Sept. 26, County Commissioners Debbie Lieberman, Judy Dodge, and Carolyn Rice, along with Juvenile Court Judges Tony Capizzi and Helen Wallace, cut the ribbon at the newly renovated Nicholas Treatment Center.

The long-awaited Residential Center is a 24-hour, non-secure residential facility that provides behavioral intervention, substance abuse treatment, and mental health services for youth between the ages of 11 and 18. Having kids placed close to home results in better outcomes, and fewer out-of-state placements will benefit the County with cost savings and better coordination of care.

The facility, which had previously been the Dora Tate Center, was originally built in 1969 and formerly housed Road Patrol staff from the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office. Facilities Director Phil Miller led the design work on the Nicholas Center and Managing Engineer Julia Gourley led construction of the project. The newly-renovated facility has four wings and a central core.

The gymnasium, which was named in honor of the late Judge Nick Kuntz, features one full and two half basketball courts, and two volleyball courts.

COAT Selected for OIPP Promising Practice Award

The Community Overdose Action Team (COAT) recently received the Promising Practice Award from the Ohio Injury Prevention Partnership (OIPP).

OIPP’s mission is to prevent injuries in Ohio such as falls among older adults, drug overdose, and child/youth injury.

The OIPP Promising Practice Award recognizes outstanding community-based interventions aimed at reducing the incidence of injury and violence in Ohio. It is their hope that, through recognition of innovative and effective programs such as the COAT, partners across the state will consider similar strategies in their injury prevention efforts.
Parents in Recovery Reach Milestone at Family Treatment Court Graduation

Five parents who have grappled with opioid addiction reached a significant milestone on Dec. 3, as they graduated from Family Treatment Court (FTC). A partnership between Montgomery County Juvenile Court, Children Services, and behavioral and addiction services providers, FTC is a voluntary program for parents with active Children Services cases.

The program takes up to 20 months, and participants are subject to regular urine screenings, counseling, support groups, court docket appearances and other measures in their case plans. “This program is intensive,” said Beth Dostal, Program Coordinator. “Participants’ support of one another is an important component to the success of all graduates. They own up to their failures, and, just as importantly, they celebrate their successes with others who are working through the same struggle.”

“We have four Children Services Caseworkers, a Supervisor and a Court Liaison who team with the Juvenile Court staff to ensure FTC participants’ compliance with their rigorous case plans,” said Jewell Good, Assistant Director for Children Services. “We are so proud of what we’ve been able to do with our graduates to help keep families together.”

A total of 28 parents have graduated in the three-year history of the program.

The “gloved one” stopped by the Stillwater Center this past August, delighting about 100 residents and staffers with a memorable performance. This Michael Jackson impersonator had all the moves down, as the crowd enjoyed Billy Jean, Beat It, Thriller and other favorites. Residents wore MJ style hats, and they decorated the halls with Michael Jackson art they created in preparation for the big event!

Information Technology’s Jacob Bailey helps employees with their Service Now requests. What’s on the horizon for IT? They are working to facilitate the Learning Management System that could be used as a cross-departmental training and learning system. Look for more on LMS in our next newsletter.
Coroner’s Office Reminds You to Prevent Carbon Monoxide Poisoning This Winter

Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas that has no smell or taste, and CO poisoning is preventable. After CO is inhaled, it enters your bloodstream and prevents blood from carrying oxygen. This lack of oxygen causes the body’s tissues and cells to fail and die.

Most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. Low-level exposure can cause difficulty thinking or concentrating, depression, irritability, or irrational decisions.

Poisoning Prevention Tips:
• Change the batteries in your CO detector every six months.
• Have your heating system, water heater, and any other gas, oil, or coal burning appliances serviced by a qualified technician every year.
• Keep vents and flues free of debris.
• Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked in an enclosed space, such as a closed-door garage.
• Never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.

If you suspect CO poisoning, call 911 or a health care professional right away.

Montgomery County Veterans Service Commission set up an information table for the Prostate Cancer Walk on Sept. 14, 2019. The Commission is looking for events to support in 2020. Submit your ideas to Missy Zimmer at zimmerm@mcohio.org.

Healthcare Advocates Available to Assist Employees

Montgomery County partnered with McGohan Brabender for benefit services. One of the features of this partnership is MB Advocates, which will be your first resource for benefits-related issues. MB Advocates will work with you to help you better understand your benefit plans. They will also work directly with the insurance companies to advocate on your behalf to answer questions or resolve claims issues you may be experiencing with an insurance carrier.

The MB Advocate team can be reached at (937) 260-4300 or (877) 635-5372, or by email at mbadvocates@mcgohanbrabender.com.
Public Health Warnings that 
Lung Injuries Related to Vaping 
Continue to Rise

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and multiple states are investigating the occurrence of severe pulmonary disease among people who report vaping. At this time, it is unknown what is causing or contributing to the symptoms and disease. As of Oct. 22, there have been 34 deaths and 1,604 cases reported nationwide. State and local public health officials in Ohio have confirmed 44 cases of vaping-related severe pulmonary illness and are investigating an additional 30 reports of illness.

On Sept. 30, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) issued a Health Alert requiring health care providers to report to their local health department all suspected cases of severe pulmonary disease of unclear cause with a history of vaping in the past 90 days.

Area Kinship Caregivers 
Receive $220,000 in 
ODJFS Grants

Montgomery County families recently received $220,000 in state assistance, thanks to one-time Post Adoption/Post Guardianship Services Grants through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services.

Many area children avoid going into foster care by staying with relatives in Kinship Care arrangements. While this can be a great benefit for the kids, it can cause financial difficulties for the caregivers who don’t typically receive assistance the way foster families do.

“People were crying they were so shocked, because we have never been able to offer anything like this before,” said Jewell Good, Assistant Director for Montgomery County Children Services. “This was an unprecedented opportunity to help meet the needs of children placed in kinship homes.”

Our Children Services team diligently worked through the application process to secure the grants. Montgomery County first received $150,000 to distribute to qualifying families with open cases, then the state offered an additional $70,000 for families with recently closed cases.

Qualifying families received $1,000 per child. “All of them were very appreciative of receiving the funds,” said Cyndi Slepicka, Child Welfare Caseworker.

Everyone Deserves a 
Second Chance

The Reentry Career Alliance Academy (RCAA) is changing lives and building a stronger community. During an interview Oct. 16, RCAA graduate Mary Stafford spoke of how the program helped her get her life back on track.

“My self-confidence is back, my self-worth. My desire to try to do better, because now I know better. I know I don’t have to be stuck in a rut being called ‘ex-offender’ because I am a ‘restored citizen’ and I can go out in the world and be proud of what I’m doing today and not dwell on my past. They gave me a voice. They gave me a reason to want to live. It’s just an awesome program.”
Dayton VA Welcomes New Leadership Team Members

Dayton, OH — The Dayton VA Medical Center is pleased to announce the recent addition of three new members to its leadership team: Caleb Cobane, Carolyn Eardley and Justin Dewberry.

Caleb Cobane has been appointed the Associate Medical Center Director.
Prior to his appointment, he worked at UK Healthcare in Lexington, Kentucky as Business Partner Senior Specialist driving value, growth and performance in a variety of services including anesthesiology, orthopedics and ophthalmology.

Carolyn Eardley serves as Associate Director for Patient Care Services.
She has more than 40 years of nursing and leadership experience. Prior to her current role, she served as Chief Nurse, Office of Practice Innovation. Eardley has also served as the Clinical Coordinator for Specialty Care, Nurse Manager, Outpatient Specialty Clinics, United American Nurses President and Nursing Instructor at the Dayton VA Medical Center.

Justin Dewberry has been appointed Assistant Director.
He first joined the VA in 2011 as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Organization Consulting and Development for Veterans Health Administration’s (VHA) National Center for Organization Development (OD). Dr. Dewberry was a Senior Organization Development Psychologist and served as National Manager for the VHA-OD Professional Affiliate Network prior to his appointment as Assistant Director in September 2019.

Public Health Receives AOHC Award for Tornado Response

The Ohio Department of Health recently awarded Public Health a Community Service Award at the Association of Ohio Health Commissioners (AOHC) annual Fall Conference. The award was for the Incident Management Team’s response efforts associated with the Memorial Day tornadoes. Over 125 Public Health employees participated in the response.

Public Health response actions included:
• Coordinated with Montgomery County’s Emergency Operations Center
• Provided recovery messages to the public via social media and website
• Notified the public about health concerns regarding water, asbestos and open burning
• Provided guidance and inspections for local food service operations
• Conducted environmental health inspections of shelters
• Increased mosquito trapping in affected areas
• Provided free birth certificates
• Provided free shot records
• Provided free cribs
• Provided free Hep A vaccinations
800 Job Seekers Attend Fall Job Fair

This year’s Fall Job Fair, held Sept. 25 at the Nutter Center, saw nearly 800 people come in search of their next opportunity. More than 160 businesses and local organizations were on hand to recruit talent.

The Fall Job Fair is a partnership between Montgomery County, Greene County, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, and Clothes That Work. Individuals have a chance to meet with several companies in a short period of time and, likewise, companies can meet several candidates. It’s all about facilitating those connections.

“Every time a new connection is made, and a person finds that next opportunity in their career, our economy and our region grow stronger,” said Montgomery County Commissioner Debbie Lieberman in her opening remarks.

Several local logistics companies met with Ohio Business College and Montgomery County’s Workforce Development team at an Oct. 29 roundtable event.

Truck Driving Academy Meets with Local Businesses

Ohio Business College and Montgomery County’s Workforce Development team met with local logistics companies to introduce them to the training available for Commercial Drivers Licenses (CDL) right here in our county.

Earlier this summer, Ohio Business College moved operations of its Truck Driving Academy to Trotwood. The move provides an opportunity for Montgomery County residents to train for an in-demand field. In just four weeks (or 10 weekends), a student can learn everything they need to take the CDL test.

At the Oct. 29 employer roundtable, several companies visited and discussed their needs with Ohio Business College leadership. Montgomery County’s Workforce Development team showed off the programs available through the County that can pay for training. Supported by Montgomery County Commissioners Debbie Lieberman, Judy Dodge and Carolyn Rice, the Truck Driving Academy will help build the workforce for local companies in need of drivers.

With the average age of drivers about nine years older than the average age of the entire workforce, the truck driving industry will need new employees in the coming years as those drivers reach retirement age. With a median annual salary of around $40,000, this is an excellent opportunity for residents to move into a growing field in just four weeks.

Nearly 800 people visited the 2019 Fall Job Fair at the Nutter Center to meet with 160 local companies currently hiring in the Dayton region.
Building Bridges with the County Engineer’s Office

Montgomery County Engineer Paul Gruner and the County Commissioners hosted a ribbon cutting for the grand reopening of the Keowee Street Bridge. Citizens who drive, bike, and walk will benefit from this upgrade. [Video highlights of the reopening can be seen here.](#)

Our County maintains more than 500 bridges. The Keowee Street Bridge, originally built as a concrete arch structure in 1931, needed a complete overhaul.

The construction contract to renovate the bridge was awarded to Eagle Bridge Company in October 2017. The structure underwent an $8,767,305 renovation and was officially reopened on Sept. 27.

The County Engineer began the rehabilitation of the North Dixie corridor in 2000 to benefit this community. Since then, the County Engineer has successfully completed all 8 projects planned along this corridor up to and across I-70. The reopening of this beautiful new bridge is the final stage of that long-term commitment to improving the lives of citizens who live and work here.

7th Annual Tire Buyback Awards Golden Tire to Citizen

The Montgomery County Solid Waste District held its seventh annual Tire Buyback Sept. 22 at the Montgomery County Transfer & Recycling Facility, collecting 14,455 tires. Residents received $2 for every tire they brought.

Within the first hour of the event, the 100,000th tire in Tire Buyback history was delivered. Montgomery County Commissioners Judy Dodge and Carolyn Rice presented citizen Amanda Staring with tickets to Dayton Dragons’ Opening Day for bringing in the “Golden Tire.” County Administrator Michael Colbert, Assistant Director of Solid Waste Services Bob Downing, and Director of Environmental Services Pat Turnbull were also present.

The Tire Buyback is a collaborative effort between Montgomery County Environmental Services, the City of Moraine, the City of Dayton, the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office, the Ohio EPA, and Public Health — Dayton & Montgomery County. A total of 93 staff members made this event possible.

Improperly disposed tires are an eyesore in the community, can breed mosquitoes and rodents, and are fire hazards. The tires collected at the event are being shredded and recycled, then turned into products such as playground mulch and landfill liner.
Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

Montgomery County’s Homeless Solutions Board had events scheduled throughout Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, Nov. 18-22.

• We collected 500 lbs. of canned goods from county staff members to give to local homeless shelters and food pantries.

• Two co-chairs of the Board, Rev. John Paddock and Dr. Victor McCarley, gave an update on the Homeless Solutions Policy Board at the Board of County Commissioners Meeting on Nov. 19.

• On Nov. 21, the Homeless Solutions Policy Board held a panel discussion at the Dayton Metro Library. Clips from the movie “The Public” were shown, and representatives from community organizations were on hand to answer questions.

The Homeless Solutions Policy Board includes representatives from government, businesses, non-profits, healthcare, housing, and the faith community. Board members bring their knowledge and experience to the table to develop and implement ways to address homelessness in Montgomery County.

In January, we will begin our annual Point-In-Time count for 2020. This helps us understand the size of our area’s homeless population and allows us to track year-to-year trends.

If you would like to learn more or get involved with the Homeless Solutions Policy Board, visit https://www.mcohio.org/departments/human_services_planning_and_development/homeless_solutions/index.php.