

April 2021 Update

By Licking County Commissioner

Tim Bubb



Greetings and welcome to the spring of 2021. It is certainly a welcome relief after the long winter and the yearlong issues dealing with the COVID 19 virus. Below is the latest update from the State of Ohio.

So let's look ahead to April. Don't be fooled – this Thursday, April 1st is April Fools' Day and the arrival of the Easter Holy Week. Enjoy your celebration of Easter Sunday on April 4th. Later in the month is the national celebration of Earth Day on April 22nd and that same day is 'Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day'. Ironically for the many folks now working from home that sums up most days!

The first 'full moon' of spring can be seen on the night of Monday, April 26th. This is called the 'pink moon' though it is likely to have a more golden hue. This will be the first of two super-moons this year and will be visible after sunset and reach peak illumination at 11:33 p.m. This year, we will be treated to the second Super-moon on Monday, May 26th. Super-moons are said to be bigger and brighter than your average full moon.

A note from the County Farm Bureau ... The annual 'Farmer's Share Breakfast' is returning in 2021 and will be held Saturday, May 1st at the McKean Community Building (Ellas Park), 6885 North Street, north of Granville. Breakfast will be scrambled eggs, sausage and pancakes served for a donation to support Licking County 4-H Camp. Dining options include dine-in, carryout and drive-thru. This popular event was one of many that were cancelled in 2020 due to the virus.

We need to maintain a positive attitude as we look to the future and as the mass vaccination program rolls out. Here in Licking County the vaccination program is being implemented by the County Health Department, Licking Memorial Hospital and a variety of pharmacy providers.

As of the last week in March here is the Corona Virus Update from the State...

854,450 confirmed cases

151,721 probable cases

1,006,171 total cases

52,539 hospitalizations

18,382 Ohio resident deaths

18,388 deaths in State of Ohio

7,369 ICU admissions



VACCINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

- **The Ohio Department of Aging has created the Vaccine Maintenance Program to ensure new residents and employees, and established residents and employees who previously decided not to receive a vaccine, can still choose to receive one.**

- **The list of facilities includes nursing homes and assisted living facilities who have not indicated their willingness to participate in the Vaccine Maintenance Program or how they would make vaccinations available to their residents and staff.**

JOB AND FAMILY SERVICES UPDATE

Governor DeWine today announced a new agreement between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and Google to conduct data analytics on all outstanding claims.

Google will review claims for markers and patterns of fraud. This will allow the department to prioritize and quickly process legitimate, outstanding claims.

CASE DATA & VACCINE INFORMATION

In-depth COVID-19 data for Ohio: coronavirus.ohio.gov.

**Ohio's central scheduling system:
gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov**

All vaccine providers: vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov

More vaccine information: coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine

Licking County Government News Briefs

The 1876 Licking County Courthouse window replacement project is moving forward. Robertson Construction Services will be serving as Construction Manager for the Project. This will be a 2021-22 project and is a complex effort as some window openings are 12-feet high and the custom replacement units will weigh more than 500-pounds. Some 100 window openings in this National Register building in downtown Newark will be replaced with custom new window units.



Work in March has shifted to the third phase of the renovation of the County's Justice Center Complex on East Main Street in Newark. The 'new jail' as it is sometimes called, was built in the 1980's and added onto in the early 90's. As with any jail it is used 24/7/365 and has seen considerable 'wear and tear'. This final phase includes a variety of inside projects, including major plumbing and ventilation updates. It is our hope to have this \$6-million multi-year jail update project complete in 2021.



The County Prosecutor's Offices will be moving from the Administration Building in the May timeframe. County Maintenance staff is finishing a conversion of the third floor of the County's East Main Street Annex on East Main Street to house Prosecutor Bill Hayes' Adult, Juvenile and Civil Divisions. The move into this unused space will provide a more secure environment, and will free up space on the fourth floor of the Administration Building for other County offices.



Finally, the restoration group (GPS) associated with the County's Historic 1889 Jail in downtown Newark remains hard at work with restoration of the building's older elevator nearly complete and a consultant at work drawing up interior renovation plans. Funds raised through a variety of projects in recent years are being directed to the project.



FYI – the popular 'Jail of Terror' fall event is postponed for this year as the health concerns remain, however smaller group October flashlight interior tours on Friday and Saturday nights are planned. And the year around 'Ghost Hunt' events are continuing with increased popularity. Check the website for information to book tours and visits.

Licking County Now Offers Text-to-9-1-1 Service

The Licking County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) in cooperation with the Licking County Sheriff's office (LCSO) announced on March 17th, the launch of Text-to-9-1-1 service at the Licking County Regional Communication Center.



Individuals in Licking County now can send a text message from their cell phone to 9-1-1 in an emergency. Text-to-9-1-1 should only be used in an emergency situation, when placing a call is not possible. For instance, if the caller is deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech impaired, or when speaking out loud would put the caller in danger.

EMA Director Sean Grady says, "Text-to-911 will greatly enable our emergency services to serve those situations where the caller cannot speak or where there might be additional dangers if they did speak. This better serves our counties residents. Licking County Sheriff Randy Thorp adds, "The Licking County Sheriff's Office is very pleased with the rollout of Text-to-911 as it enhances the ability to contact public safety for assistance. This is another tool in the tool box to make Licking County a safer community."

If there is an emergency and you are unable to make a call, type "911" in the recipient field of your cell phone and remember these steps:

- **In the first text message send the location and type of emergency.**
- **Text in simple words - Send a short text message without abbreviations or slang.**
- **Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker.**
- **Don't text and drive. The Text-to-9-1-1 service may come with challenges.**
- **A text or data plan is required to place a Text-to-9-1-1.**
- **As with all text messages, messages to 9-1-1 may take longer to receive, may get out of order, or may not be received at all.**
- **If you do not receive a text response from 9-1-1, try to contact 9-1-1 another way.**
- **Photos and videos cannot be sent to 9-1-1 at this time.**
- **Text-to-9-1-1 cannot include more than one person. Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 9-1-1.**

Voice Calls to 9-1-1 Are Still the Best and Fastest Way to Contact 9-1-1. Because voice calls to 9-1-1 provide more information to 9-1-1 call centers, you should always make a voice call to 9-1-1 during an emergency whenever possible.

Find a complete guide from the FCC on how to utilize Text-to-911 correctly [here](#)

2021 Return of Weathervane Playhouse Still Evolving

The Weathervane Playhouse Board of Directors has announced that while it is planning to reopen in 2021, the Summer Season will not begin in June as it normally does, given the current COVID-19 restrictions. Live performances face challenges that keep actors, the crew, theatre workers, and audience members safe in close quarters. Current government restrictions allow only 75 seats to be sold for a performance.



Additionally, the Playhouse has recently been notified that housing on the Newark Campus of The Ohio State University for cast and crew members will be unavailable this summer due to the pandemic. Hopefully, as more vaccinations are administered, restrictions will be eased and allow the Theatre to reopen at a time and in a manner that is different from the usual season.

The status of summer performances may be monitored at www.weathervaneplayhouse.org

Specific questions may be directed to www.boxoffice@weathervaneplayhouse.org

Economic Development Booming in Licking County

Good news - unemployment levels have declined to more normal levels of around four percent and the trend toward continued economic development in Licking County continues. Bad news – it was announced at the end of March that Nathan Strum, the Director of our Economic Development Agency 'Grow Licking County', is stepping down after six years to accept a similar position in the Columbus area. The County very much appreciates Nate's dedication and hard work, as he has been a driving force in the County's major economic development achievements in recent years!



At the Newark-Heath-Licking County Port Authority site in Heath the growth continues with another spec building of some 30-thousand square feet planned for construction in 2021.

In addition to the large industrial building, the Port Authority has had success in building and marketing spec building of this medium size at their industrial park site on the former Air Force and Kaiser properties. This building, artist rendering pictured 'right', will be the 11th new building constructed on the site either by the Authority or developers.



In western Licking County, in both the Etna region and in the year ahead in the 'Jobs Ready' (JRS) region of Pataskala, we are seeing continued growth in the logistics, warehouse and distribution market. In the photo right is Amazon's newest one million plus square foot



distribution center off Mink Road. On the open ground just to the north of the new Amazon facility (open ground in the lower part of photo) the TPA Group of developing yet another one million plus square foot distribution center that will be occupied by Ashley Furniture by next year.

Also in Etna Township, construction is underway at three other sites. At Tollgate Road and U.S. Route 40 the development group Scannell Development has excavated and is putting up wall panels for a building which will house a half million square foot distribution facility. It will be occupied later this year by a major U.S. distribution firm. Scannell is also planning a second large building on the site just south of the National Road and east of the first Amazon site. Meanwhile, across the street developer Core 5 is completing a 430-thousand square foot spec logistics building which is currently being marketed. Also, Exeter, the owner of the Prologis buildings, is planning to break ground on Mink Road, south of the Prologis/Exeter site, for a 400-thousand square foot spec building.

In in the large area between U.S. Route 40 and I-70, and east of State Route 310, the CRG Development Group has two facilities and a retail center under construction. The first to take shape



will be a new Love's Travel Center, and further east of Route 310 the development is preparing the site of a pair of large logistics/distribution facilities.

It should also be noted that the Kohl's warehouse and distribution center, just west of State Route 310 in that same neighborhood is starting operations. The project was delayed in 2020, when the building was completed, due to COVID related delays in the delivery of equipment. Kohl's is currently making the facility operational and in a full hiring mode.



Moving north from Etna Township we expect to see construction of three new large logistics facilities in the 'Jobs Ready' (JRS) region of the City of Pataskala.

TPA Developers, who did the new Amazon facility and are constructing the warehouse for Ashley Furniture, are proposing a 1.2-million square foot warehouse/distribution facility of Mink Street and just north of Refugee Road. Pataskala officials are currently considering zoning changes and buffering requirements of the proposed facility, which would be marketed by the TPA Group.

Further north on the Pataskala JRS site near Broad Street a South Carolina developer is proposing two major buildings. Red Rock Corporation is completing financing and could start construction this year on one of two large one million square feet logistics and/or manufacturing facilities. These would be adjacent to the AEP facilities site and are already zoned for the development.

***A historical note – the Jobs Ready Site region of Pataskala was facilitated a decade ago when Licking County Government and the State of Ohio with each contributing \$3-million to construct the Red-Chip Parkway or JRS Development Road, in effect opening up this region of over one thousand acres for future development. This development road improvement was then given to Pataskala as an asset to their Corporate Park. The first occupant of the JRS Park is the newly developed AEP Distribution/Construction site and substation.**

Update from Licking County's Soil & Water Conservation District – Upcoming Programs

(Kristy Hawthorne, District Program Administrator)



How to Build and Maintain a Healthy Pond –

Wednesday, April 28th from 5:30pm-7:00pm

Brent Dennis, of Soil & Water, will discuss considerations for building a new pond, including soil types and how to determine the size based on your watershed. Steve Fender of Fender Fish Hatchery will address pond concerns, fish stocking, fish habitat, and methods to control aquatic vegetation and provide insight on how to maintain a healthy pond. Soil & Water will be taking orders for our Fish Sale at the clinic too.

Clinic will be hosted at 2400 Montgomery Road and signs will be posted. There are two pavilions next to the pond where the class will be held. In the case of inclement weather, the clinic may be rescheduled or cancelled.

Details and RSVP here: Questions? Call Soil & Water at 740-670-5330 or email BrentDennis@LickingSWCD.com.

Thank you to our partner, Granville Milling for supporting this workshop!

Thanks to the community for another successful spring Tree Seedling Sale! For those who have pre-ordered trees, the pick-up date is Friday, April 16th from 8:00am to 7:00pm at the barn next to the County Ag Building 771 East Main Street in east Newark.

Although the deadline has past, there will be limited number of species available at the Backyard Conservation Day, information below. A list of species available on Saturday, May 8th will be announced after we distribute the pre-ordered trees on April 16th.

Backyard Conservation Day Saturday, May 8th from 10:00am until 2:00 pm

Location - Soil & Water barn, next to our office at 771 East Main, at the County Ag facility. A Day of Education and Celebration of Licking County's Natural Wonders!

Join us for a day of hands-on activities at Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District's very own Land Lab! Come experience all we have to offer with activities such as:

- **Exploring a vernal pool**
- **Learning about rain gardens and the pollinators it will attract**
- **Identifying native and invasive species with tastings of foraged food**
- **Nature-related craft kits for kids**

Want to take the fun home? Tree seedlings, rain barrels, pond management books, and a host of conservation products will also be available for purchase!

LHM's Ben Broyles Receives Health Department Award

The Licking County Health Department's (LCHD) Board of Health recently named Ben Broyles, Vice President Community Health and Wellness at Licking Memorial Hospital (LMH), as the 2020 Public Health Guardian Award recipient. The award recognizes an individual, agency or program that has made a significant contribution to the promotion and protection of public health in Licking County.

"Ben has been an integral community partner for the health department throughout our pandemic response, which began last March. He has been quick to offer assistance in any way possible, and his positive attitude toward all things should be recognized. Health department staff agrees that Ben is most deserving of our 2020 Public Health Guardian Award," said Chad Brown, Licking County Health Commissioner.



(photo – l-r – Chad Brown and Ben Broyles)

When it became clear that COVID-19 was a threat to the community, Ben worked closely with senior leadership to lead a team of Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) staff who were instrumental in implementing immediate measures to ensure LMH and all other LMHS facilities remained a safe place for patients to receive care.

“Ben and his staff adapted quickly to the situation and accepted new responsibilities within the organization to bolster safety precautions by testing and screening employees, patients and visitors for COVID-19 symptoms,” said LMHS President & CEO Rob Montagnese.

Ben Broyles, OTR/L, gave significant guidance as COVID arose as he, LMHS leadership and staff members established a Drive-through Clinic inside a vacant building to test patients with COVID-19 symptoms in order to circumvent potentially ill patients from entering LMHS facilities, within a few days. This facility was converted to a walk-in clinic during the winter months and serves an average of 40 patients daily.

Ben, along with other leaders and employees, also provided direction and insight to other organizations, such as schools and local businesses, regarding best safety practices during the pandemic. He provided regular updates to the Licking County COVID Defense Team, and led the formation of the Post-acute Care Coalition. LMH formed the Coalition early in the pandemic to support and assist local congregate care facilities, and partnered with the Licking County Health Department, the Emergency Management Agency and congregate care leadership.

Ben joined Licking Memorial Health Systems (LMHS) in 2014 as the Director of Rehabilitation Services, Home Care and Community Case Management. He was promoted as Assistant Vice President Community Health & Wellness in August 2019 and promoted to his current position now, Vice President Community Health & Wellness in May 2020.

Draft House Fundraiser Benefits County Dog Shelter

The County Commissioners and the staff of the Licking County Dog Shelter and Adoption Center, in Heath, send a BIG thank you to Eula Rizzo, the owner of the Draft House bar and restaurant in downtown Newark, and her staff and patrons as well.

Over the Saint Patrick's Day holiday week they held a raffle and fund raisers to benefit the dogs in the care of the County and raised a 'whopping' \$4,000 to benefit the shelter dogs.

In the photo right, from left to right, we see 'Buddy' the Shelter Mascot Dog; David Shellhouse, the Chief Dog Warden for Licking County receiving the check; and Eula Rizzo of the Draft House.



In addition to what has become an annual fundraiser, Eula has personally donated throughout the year to assist in the care and welfare of the shelter dogs. We appreciate her 'big heart'.

The Draft House is a local institution, just off the Square on West Main Street, a place where 'everyone knows your name' and the Commissioners again say 'thank you' to all those great folks!

CFAES

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION LICKING COUNTY

LICKING COUNTY MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS YEARLY PLANT SALE



Saturday, May 8, 2021

8:30 A.M. – 2:00 P.M..

473 Hudson Ave, Newark

The Licking County Master Gardener Volunteers invite you to attend their Yearly Plant Sale. For your shopping convenience, our plant sale coincides with the Annual Hudson Street Porch & Garage Sale

A wide variety of plants have been prepared just for you, including perennials for your sunny and shady spots, succulents, garden items and accessories. Veggie gardeners will find a wide variety of healthy tomato and pepper seedlings and guidance for when to plant them.

Master Gardener Volunteers will be on hand to answer your questions or suggest plants for your garden conditions. Contact Lori Swihart at 740-618-6334 or email swihart.33@osu.edu for questions or directions. Check us out on Facebook or

visit: <https://licking.osu.edu/home>



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AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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Licking Park District Launches Adopt-A-Trail/Park Program

The Adopt-A-Trail program was developed by the Licking Park District to promote environmental stewardship by bringing community members and organizations together to protect and maintain the natural beauty of our trails and parks.



Trail Adopters assist the Licking Park District by helping to maintain safe and well-groomed trails and parks, and by reporting conditions and hazards. Individual and Group Adopters choose their segment of trail or park and commit to a monthly visit for litter removal, clearing debris and fallen limbs, trimming vegetation, and reporting trail/park conditions and hazards. Adopters report service hours to the Volunteer Program Coordinator.

Volunteers are our eyes and ears in our 12 properties, 45 miles of paved trails and 26 miles of natural surface trails. We rely on the dedication and hard work of volunteers to help us keep our trails and parks well maintained and safe for everyone to enjoy.

To become an Adopter, please visit www.LickingParkDistrict.com/volunteer/ to complete the online volunteer application.

Licking Park District's Mission...

The mission of the Licking Park District (LPD) is to acquire, manage, preserve, and conserve natural areas within Licking County, while protecting wildlife and local history in a manner that enriches our communities and provides access to diverse parks, educational opportunities, and health and wellness activities.

The Licking Park District manages over 1,600 acres of parkland on 12 sites and manages over 45 miles of paved multi-use trails and 26 miles of natural surface trails across Licking County. The Licking Park District office, located at Infirmary Mound Park, is easily accessed from Rt. 37. Visit the website www.lickingparkdistrict.com to see all the programs and opportunities your Licking Park District offers or contact us at 740-586-2535.

County Planning Commission Returns to In Person (Hybrid) Sessions

Licking County Planning Commission member Kevin Black (photo left) leads the County Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance to open the recent March meeting.



The Commission met in person at the County Administration Building with a 'virtual hybrid' option for those unable to attend and participate in person. Members enjoyed a return to a more normal meeting format.

Greeting visitors to the Licking County Administration Building in April is a display by the Master Gardeners.

It is a breath of spring and a great exhibit detailing the various aspects of the mission of the Master Gardeners, which is affiliated with the OSU (Licking County) Cooperative Extension Service.

Lori Swihart, Extension Program Assistant adds...



The Licking County Extension Office is currently open by appointment, Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. With reduced staffing in place, all staff will continue to work remotely when not scheduled to be in the office. Please continue to reach out to us through phone calls, emails and social media contacts. We are still here and happy to serve you. Feel free to contact Lori at Extension to learn how to join the program and become a Master Gardener.

OSU Extension, Suite 103, 771 East Main Street, Newark, OH 43055

740-670-5315 Office www.swihart.33@osu.edu

Feel free to forward this e-mail in any direction you would like, and let me know the e-mail address of anyone who would like to be included on my Update Newsletter list

**** I would also invite you to check Facebook and visit Licking County Commissioners, Elect Commissioner Tim Bubb and Commissioner Tim Bubb.***

I can be e-mailed at tbubb@lcounty.com, and my desk phone number at the Commissioner's Office is 740-670-5118.

Best Regards! Commissioner Tim Bubb