

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MORPC wants more input on regional plan

Saturday, January 16, 2010 5:08 PM

By LIN RICE

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Representatives of the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) turned to leaders of the Logan-Union-Champaign Regional Planning Commission last week for help in preparing MORPC's new regional plan. MORPC assistant director of transportation Nancy Reger told the LUC commission that MORPC could use more help in getting the word out on its online survey, which asks residents what they think Central Ohio should look like in years to come. "We're trying to get 10,000 responses, and we only have 5,000 so far with only three weeks left to go," Reger said. Reger said that MORPC hopes to finish its Shaping our Future plan by 2012. This is the first time the organization has asked residents of the 12-county region to participate in its planning, she added. "We have a federal requirement to put together a regional transportation plan every four years, but we're hoping for a plan covering not just transportation, but also air quality, water quality," Reger said. MORPC plans to use the information gathered from its online survey to steer programs relating to reducing harmful emissions into the air, attracting and retaining business, promoting energy efficiency, supporting local food sources, encouraging sustainable development, promoting and supporting stable, livable neighborhoods, advancing a multi-modal transportation system, and maintaining and enhancing the surface and ground water resources of Central Ohio. The survey includes some broad questions such as "What do you like most/ least about central Ohio," down to the more specific "Do you deliberately purchase Ohio grown food from your grocery store." "Our world is changing and this new approach is being launched that listens to your needs, identifies core issues and creates a plan of action that will lead our region," MORPC executive director Chester Jourdan, Jr. said. Areas included in the regional plan are Franklin, Delaware, Licking, Fairfield, Pickaway, Madison, Union, Morrow, Marion, Knox, Ross and Fayette counties. Reger said MORPC's online survey takes about 10 minutes to complete, and can be accessed at <http://regionalplan.questionpro.com>. The survey will be online until the end of January. MORPC hopes to present the goals derived from its study in mid-2010.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/marysville/stories/2010/01/16/0117mamorpc-plan_in.html?sid=104

5th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Ride

Save the Date! Saturday, October 9, 2010: 5th Annual Breast Cancer Awareness Ride (BCAR) at the Trek Bicycle Store East, 5334 North Hamilton Road. Spread the word to your friends and co-workers who ride—ride is open to riders of all skill levels. Rides of 10, 27 and 50 miles. The 2009 Columbus BCAR last October drew 165 riders and raised \$4,500 for the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. The Columbus ride was number 2 in number of riders and number 4 in money raised for breast cancer research and education among 100 U.S. cities that held rides October 10, 2009. Let's make Columbus number 1 in both categories this coming October.

Rick Tilton

Assistant Director

Department of Public Service

90 West Broad Street

Columbus, Ohio 43215

Office: (614) 645-7263

Save the Date for Healthy Communities Through Active Transportation Conference

On March 30, federal, state and local safety advocates in Ohio are planning a one-day conference that brings together a wide variety of partners and stakeholders with an interest in creating healthier communities across Ohio. This recognizes the broad definition of community health, including economic vibrancy, transportation efficiency and safety, environmental sustainability, social equity and quality of life, and public health and welfare. The goal is to have all partners recognize the confluence of efforts that lead to these outcomes such as improved

facilities and policies and increased safety and health for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel; reinvestment in existing mixed-use city and town centers, as well as a greater mix of land uses in new development; design and development policies and regulations that support complete roadway designs that are inviting and safe for all users. The Conference is free and will be held at the Riffe Center in Downtown Columbus across from the Statehouse. [Click here for more information](#)

Central Ohio Bicycle Club Presents Indoor Time Trial Series

Sponsored by: National Engineering and Bicycle One

When: January 23, February 13, and March 13 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Where: Bicycle One, 82 Mill St, Gahanna, OH 43230 (614) 467-4043

Cost: \$10.00 per category per event (seniors) \$5.00 per category per event (juniors)

Course: 5K rolling course. The same course will be used for each event.

Format: Riders will ride in the order of registration. Registration will open at 9:45 AM and will remain open until 1:30 PM. Riders' bikes will be connected, one at a time, to a Computrainer computerized trainer. The rider will be given 5 minutes to warm-up before starting the course.

Prize List: \$20 gift card to Bicycle One for 1st place only!

License?: This is NOT a sanctioned event, and as such no license will be required. But it also means there is no insurance; therefore, if you crash its your problem. However, if you crash on a trainer you have bigger issues, and maybe cycling really isn't your thing.

Questions: Email Rich Jones at RTJones@NationalEngineering.com

Appointments: Unless you have nothing better to do than hang out a bike shop all day you can go to the COBC Team website www.team-cobc.com

Selection of Pedestrian Treatments at Unsignalized Crossings

Presented by the [Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center](#) (PBIC)

Presenter: Charlie Zegeer, director of PBIC

MORPC, Thursday January 21, from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m.

Location: This free webinar will be held in the **Muskingum Conference Room** at MORPC, 111 Liberty St., Suite 100, Columbus OH 43215. Here is a [map with directions](#).

Please RSVP by replying to this e-mail, as space is limited. Parking passes will be provided after you have RSVP'd.

If you want more details about the webinar, please continue reading below. Thank you!

Ariel Godwin, MORPC

(614) 233-4123

agodwin@morpc.org

DESCRIPTION

Selection of Pedestrian Treatments at Unsignalized Crossings

Thursday January 21, 2:00—3:00 p.m.

This PBIC Livable Communities Webinar will focus on the various treatment options to improve pedestrian safety at unsignalized intersections and midblock locations. Charlie Zegeer, director of PBIC and associate director of engineering and planning at the UNC Highway Safety Research Center, will provide guidance for making decisions in selecting such treatments as marked crosswalks, signing, raised median islands, road diets (lane reductions), rapid-flash beacons, HAWK signals, the addition of traditional traffic and pedestrian signals, and other measures. Charlie Zegeer has worked at the Highway Safety Research Center since 1986, and has taught courses on pedestrian and roadway safety throughout the U.S. over the past 25 years. Recently, Mr. Zegeer took part in an international scan of five European countries, sponsored by AASHTO and FHWA, to survey ways to improve walking and bicycling safety and mobility. He has been principal investigator and primary report author on numerous federal studies and Guides, including the FHWA guide, How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, and the NCHRP report, A Guide for Reducing Collisions Involving Pedestrians.

Ariel Godwin

Assistant Planner, Active Transportation & Safety

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

111 Liberty St., Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215
agodwin@morpc.org
Tel. (614) 233-4123
Fax (614) 228-1904

MORPC SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

In 2009, more than 3,368 schools from all 50 states participated in Walk to School Day. Ohio had 130 cities register, while Central Ohio had 40 schools within 18 cities participating in Walk to School. MORPC is continuing its efforts to promote safer and improved streets, healthier habits by encouraging physical activity, and environment conservation by reducing traffic congestion and pollution. Throughout each month in 2010 MORPC will profile a Central Ohio school district that participated in Walk to School. Please click [here](#) to view our January pick: Gahanna – Jefferson Public Schools. MORPC will kick-off its first Safe Routes to School workshop for 2010 on **Tuesday, February 23, 2010 from 10am – 12pm at MORPC, in the Scioto Conference Room** (see attached flyer). Please RSVP by Tuesday, February 16, 2010. I also encourage each of you to sign up for the statewide conference “Healthy Communities, Active Transportation” on March 30th. The conference is free of charge and will cover many topics related to promoting walking and biking. More information is available here: <http://www.dot.state.oh.us/hcat>. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you again for helping making 2009 Walk to School such a success.

Amanda McEldowney
Associate Planner
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
111 Liberty Street Suit 100
Columbus, OH 43215
614-233-4112
amceldowney@morpc.org

Education Forum: Safe Routes to School

Tuesday, February 23, 2010
10:00am-12:00pm
Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
Scioto Conference Room
111 Liberty Street, Suite 100
Columbus, OH 43215

Agenda

- I. Welcome and Introduction
- II. Overview of Safe Routes to School & Examples of Funded Projects— Julie Walcoff, ODOT
- III. First Look at School Pool Program—Janet Berardi, MORPC
- IV. Summary of Last Workshop—Amanda McEldowney, MORPC
- V. Closing Remarks & Next Steps

Please RSVP to Amanda McEldowney at 614-233-4112 or email at amceldowney@morpc.org .

Active and Safe Routes to School

MORPC on Tuesday Feb. 23, 2010, from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.:
Active and Safe Routes to School
Presented by Tools of Change

This webinar will be held in MORPC's Scioto Conference Room. We are located at 111 Liberty St., in the Brewery District near downtown Columbus. Here is a map with directions. You can

attend this webinar for free. Please RSVP by replying to this e-mail. Parking passes will be provided after you have RSVP'd. If you want more details about the webinar, please continue reading below. Thank you!

Ariel Godwin, MORPC

(614) 233-4123

agodwin@morpc.org

DESCRIPTION

Active and Safe Routes to School

Tuesday, February 23, 12 noon to 1:30 pm Eastern Time

Jacky Kennedy, Program manager, Green Communities Canada; and Kent Cruger, Principal, Bear Creek Elementary School

This webinar features case studies from two of North America's leading Active and Safe Routes to School programs, which engage elementary school students and their families in walking and cycling more.

The first presentation will provide an overview of Active and Safe Routes to School in North America, discuss why and how Green Communities Canada has shifted its program to focus increasingly on school travel planning, and describe the results being achieved. It will also speak to how to sell the approach to your local stakeholders (funders and partners) and how to make the approach work in rural areas.

The second case study will describe what has happened at Bear Creek Elementary School, Boulder, Colorado. When Bear Creek first introduced its program in 2007, only one quarter of its students were walking or bicycling to school with the majority being driven by car. Over the past two years, it has seen an almost three-fold increase in the proportion of students using active transportation; seventy per cent of students are now walking or bicycling to school consistently throughout the school year. Bear Creek is the recipient of the James L. Oberstar Safe Routes to School Award for 2008 awarded by the (U.S.) National Centre for Safe Routes to School.

Ariel Godwin

Assistant Planner, Active Transportation & Safety

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

111 Liberty St., Suite 100

Columbus, OH 43215

agodwin@morpc.org

Tel. (614) 233-4123

Fax (614) 228-1904

Multi-Modal School Site Planning, Design and Transportation for Primary Grades

Registration is open for the next joint National Center for Safe Routes to School / ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) webinar.

The webinar will address:

Multi-Modal School Site Planning, Design and Transportation for Primary Grades Wednesday, Feb 24, 2010 Noon - 1:30 EST

The National Center is subsidizing the cost of the training so it's \$25 per site (this means you can invite as many people to view as will fit into your space). Additional charge for more than one quiz for Professional Development Hours (for engineers). To read a description and register, go to:

http://www.ite.org/education/webinars_SRTS.asp

Best,

Caroline Dickson

Communications and Marketing Manager

National Center for Safe Routes to School, University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center

(919) 962-5835

dickson@hsrc.unc.edu

www.saferoutesinfo.org

SAFETY

We Win “Take the Lane” Case!

Jan 15th, 2010 | By Jeff Stephens | Category: News

Yesterday, Consider Biking helped reinforce the right for bicyclists to ride in the road, and control a road lane if necessary. We provided legal defense in Municipal Court for a cyclist who was incorrectly cited for “not riding as far to the right as possible.” We saw this case as a critical means to reinforce the excellent bicycling (traffic) laws we helped Columbus enhance in late 2008. With a pedaling revolution underway in Columbus and more bicyclists on the road...we felt it important to have the court affirm our right to use a full lane. Several of our Board members provided pro-bono legal efforts to compile the necessary information and try this case. Thanks to **Doug Morgan** for taking the lead and representing the defendant. Thanks also go out to **John Gideon and Maryellen O’Shaughnessy** for compiling the materials for the case. Staff member, Jeff Stephens, was prepared (although not needed) to serve as an Expert Witness. Interestingly, this core of Consider Biking leaders, made up a majority of the engaged bicyclists that spent over six months in late 2008 enhancing the Columbus Traffic Code related to bicycles. Isn’t it grand that these leaders banded together in the last two weeks to help cement the laws we crafted to better protect bicyclists on our roads? Here is a link to Doug Morgan’s blog which provides a detailed description of yesterday’s proceedings. [dougasmorgan.typepad.com/two_wheeling/http://www.considerbiking.org/we-win-take-the-lane-case/](http://www.considerbiking.org/we-win-take-the-lane-case/)

Worst corridors to bike, walk

MORPC compiles list from 5 years of data on auto crashes with cyclists, pedestrians

Saturday, January 16, 2010 3:12 AM

BY JENNIFER SMITH RICHARDS

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Bikers and walkers were in accidents with vehicles 150 times on a 3-mile segment of High Street in a five-year period, making the busy strip the city’s most crash-prone corridor for those who don’t get around by auto. The bit of High Street that runs from Clintonville to the Short North can be a bear, a study from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission says. The agency looked at police reports from 2003 to 2007 to find the area’s trouble spots. Roads along the Ohio State University campus and the Hilltop community on the West Side are the most troublesome. The five-year study, which is the first of this scale that MORPC has conducted, pinpoints both corridors and specific locations that are danger zones, including:

- Lane Avenue at High Street
- High Street at Long Street
- Broad Street at Central Avenue

The most-dangerous areas were selected using a score that considers the severity of the crash and gives weight to whether children or adults older than 65 are involved. The High Street corridor has far more crashes than any other. "I think High Street is probably one of the most-aware areas for bikers in Columbus, but it also gets the most traffic," said Jamie Fellrath, a Columbus bike commuter and blogger who takes the corridor to work. A 3-mile stretch of Sullivant Avenue (from Cypress Avenue to Derrer Road) had 91 crashes in the five-year period. "In the Hilltop area, where a lot of the other severe crash corridors are, there may be a more moderate number of pedestrians and cyclists, but the infrastructure there might not be enough to support" them, said Ariel Godwin, an assistant planner at MORPC. Sidewalks there are scarce, he said. The commission says the number of total crashes has declined in the past several years, but those involving pedestrians or cyclists have not. That’s because more people are walking and riding bikes than before. MORPC studied crash frequency and severity in other central Ohio cities, too: most of Franklin County’s cities, plus Pickerington in Fairfield County, Delaware and Powell in Delaware County and Pataskala in Licking County.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/16/dangerous_streets.ART_ART_01-16-10_B1_RGGALG1.html

MORPC REVISES REGIONAL PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE HIGH-CRASH LOCATION LIST

(Columbus-January 16, 2010) The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) recently released the top pedestrian and bicycle crash locations in the transportation planning area. Further examination revealed that while Lane Avenue, Hague Avenue and Sullivant Avenue as recently released on the list are in the top five, the top three pedestrian and bicycle crash locations as depicted on the map are:

- Lane Avenue at High Street
- High Street at Long Street
- Broad Street at Central Avenue

The correction will be made to the regional pedestrian and bicycle high-crash list and made available to each city in MORPC's transportation planning area. The revised list will be available on MORPC's website at www.morpc.org.

January 17, 2010

Driven to Distraction

Forget Gum. Walking and Using Phone Is Risky.

By MATT RICHTEL

SAN FRANCISCO — On the day of the collision last month, visibility was good. The sidewalk was not under repair. As she walked, Tiffany Briggs, 25, was talking to her grandmother on her cellphone, lost in conversation. Very lost. "I ran into a truck," Ms. Briggs said. It was parked in a driveway. Distracted driving has gained much attention lately because of the inflated crash risk posed by drivers using cellphones to talk and text. But there is another growing problem caused by lower-stakes multitasking — distracted walking — which combines a pedestrian, an electronic device and an unseen crack in the sidewalk, the pole of a stop sign, a toy left on the living room floor or a parked (or sometimes moving) car. The era of the mobile gadget is making mobility that much more perilous, particularly on crowded streets and in downtown areas where multiple multitaskers veer and swerve and walk to the beat of their own devices.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/17/technology/17distracted.html?th&emc=th>

Group forms to curb distracted driving

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 3:14 AM

By Bill Bush

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Trying to become a political force as powerful as Mothers Against Drunk Driving, a group supported by U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood launched yesterday with a mission to stop people from chatting on cell phones while driving. The group, called FocusDriven, is the first national nonprofit organization devoted specifically to raising awareness about the dangers of "distracted driving," which LaHood said also could include texting or eating a hamburger while driving. He hopes it will have the same impact as MADD on toughening drinking-and-driving laws. The group plans to put out its message via testimonials from people whose loved ones were killed in crashes in which a driver was on a cell phone or texting. The group will be led by Jennifer Smith, of Grapevine, Texas, whose mother was killed in 2008 by a man who was talking on his cell phone while driving. The campaign is supported by the National Safety Council. "The American public clearly wants to see some action on this," LaHood said during a teleconference from Washington, D.C. "This is now a hot-button issue for state legislators. ... I hope it will become a hot-button issue for Congress this year."

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/national_world/stories/2010/01/13/copy/distracted_driving.ART_ART_01-13-10_A1_C1G9KO1.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

THE HOT ISSUE

Should state law ban texting while driving, the use of all hand-held devices while driving, or neither?

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/national_world/stories/2010/01/13/hotissue_0113.html?adsc=politics&sid=101

January 13, 2010

Jury selected for DeMastry trial; arguments begin today

BY MORGAN DAY

The Eagle-Gazette Staff

LANCASTER -- Jurors in an aggravated vehicular homicide case will view the scene of the fatal crash this morning, then listen to opening statements from prosecuting and defense attorneys. Attorneys selected the 12-member jury Tuesday, questioning about 40 potential jurors from about 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the courtroom of Common Pleas Judge Richard Berens. Jurors will deliberate in the case of Caitlin DeMastry, a 22-year-old Lancaster resident accused of driving the vehicle that struck and killed Charles "Charlie" Cain Jr. as he walked along Sheridan Drive at about 3:20 a.m. Feb. 22. DeMastry's passenger initially took the blame for driving the 2000 Honda Accord, but officials later discovered it might have been DeMastry driving. She is charged with aggravated vehicular homicide, a first-degree felony; involuntary manslaughter, a third-degree felony; and tampering with evidence, a third-degree felony. Fairfield County Assistant Prosecutor Paul Morehart said the prosecution will call several witnesses to the stand throughout the trial. Those witnesses include Lancaster Police Department dispatchers and officers; Lancaster firefighters; a Fairfield Medical Center police officer, physician and counselor; a Licking County forensic pathologist; and a handful of other individuals.

<http://www.lancastereaglegazette.com/article/20100113/NEWS01/1130309/1001/NEWS/Jury-selected-for-DeMastry-trial-arguments-begin-today>

January 15, 2010

Doctor: Pedestrian killed in car crash wasn't suicidal

BY MORGAN DAY

The Eagle-Gazette Staff

LANCASTER -- It has been nearly a year since Charles "Charlie" Cain Jr.'s death, but Corey Caton still can view the text messages he sent her hours before he died. Those messages turned out to be the last correspondence between the couple, who were set to wed months later. In the messages, Cain asked Caton if she would "help him go to the sixth floor tomorrow," meaning the sixth floor of Fairfield Medical Center where patients are treated for mental health issues. She said Cain threw an empty pill bottle at her earlier that night -- Feb. 21 -- and said he had swallowed all the pills. He had threatened to harm himself in the past, but Caton testified Thursday in Common Pleas Court that she didn't believe he intended to commit suicide that night.

<http://www.lancastereaglegazette.com/article/20100115/NEWS01/1150303/-1/NEWS17/Doctor--Pedestrian-killed-in-car-crash-wasn-t-suicidal>

City should clear Downtown sidewalks

Sunday, January 17, 2010 3:36 AM

Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman has proclaimed many times his commitment to Downtown revitalization and his desire that it be a place to live and call home. Why is it, then, that Downtown's sidewalks are still covered in snow? By leaving the sidewalks uncleared, the city is taking away the main feature of downtown living: walkability. I live Downtown, mainly for the short walking commute to my office across from the Statehouse. But the short walk is anything but easy in the snow (which had turned to ice). The city must send crews to clear the sidewalks if we ever hope to turn Columbus into a pedestrian-friendly city.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2010/01/17/Brayley_ART_01-17-10_G4_6IGA776.html

LOCAL NEWS

January 14, 2010

City, county to be commended for making bike/walking path

Editor, the Gazette:

Both of us are really enjoying the new bike/walking bridge and the continuing upgrading to the bike/walking path from Chillicothe to Frankfort and beyond. It now totals 19 miles one way. The city, county and state are to be commended for making this path a reality. As members of the Tri-County Triangle Trail Organization, we think -- and we're sure many others would concur -- the path as it is today would not have come about without the dedication and hard work of Delbert Doles and Doris Hill. They spend countless hours in meetings probing the city, county, state and railroads to obtain grants and keep things moving and have organized auctions and various fundraisers to raise matching monies to see the path completed. They've also spent countless hours helping to maintain the path to keep it in excellent condition. We hope those with authority will either dedicate the new bridge or the path from Chillicothe to Frankfort in Doles' and Hill's names. They are very deserving of such an honor, and we can assure everyone who uses the path: Without these two's untiring dedication and perseverance, the bicycle/walking path would not be what it is today.

<http://www.chillicothe Gazette.com/article/20100114/OPINION03/1140316/1014/OPINION/City-county-to-be-commended-for-making-bike-walking-path>

Residential resurfacing on 2010 list

City finds cash to fix neighborhood roads

Saturday, January 16, 2010 3:11 AM

By Mark Ferenchik

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Columbus has \$1.6 million to resurface a handful of streets serving residential areas this year. Two weeks ago, the city's planning and operations administrator said the city didn't have the money to resurface residential streets in 2010. But public service spokesman Rick Tilton said yesterday that the money was included in a November 2009 bond sale.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/16/STREETS.ART_ART_01-16-10_B1_RGGALG5.html

Westerville Road Corridor Study

Hello. We have added the comments received, related to the Westerville Road Corridor Study November 17th public meeting, to our website. They can be viewed at the below location. Several of the comments are directed to ODOT (and possibly also to the city of Columbus Transportation Division or other local government entities). Thanks.

http://www.morpc.org/trans/sp_SR3_CommentsFromNovember17.pdf

Ethan Ortman, AICP

Transportation Planner

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission

111 Liberty St., Suite 100,

Columbus, Ohio 43215

t-614-233-4153 f-614-233-4253

Parkway widening awarded state funds

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 8:02 PM

By JENNIFER NOBLIT

ThisWeek Staff Writer

The state is kicking in funds for a nearly \$7.8-million project to widen Emerald Parkway between Tuttle Crossing Boulevard and Rings Road, the city of Dublin announced Monday. The city learned last month that the project, estimated to cost \$7,755,155, would receive a \$4,373,647 grant from the Ohio Public Works Commission. The grant funds will become available July 1 when the new fiscal year begins, Dublin spokesman Michael Racey said. The Emerald Parkway improvements are a joint project between Columbus and Dublin; Racey said 60 percent of the project area is in Columbus and 40 percent is in Dublin.

<http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/dublin/stories/2010/01/13/parkway-widening.html?sid=104>

Gahanna-Jefferson Public Schools Featured in MORPC's Walk to School Program

Last October, forty schools in central Ohio participated in Walk to School events held throughout the month. MORPC hosted several coordination meetings to help community leaders, volunteers and teachers learn more about the International Walk to School program and how to set up a program in their schools. International Walk to School Day was held on Wednesday, October 7, 2009, but MORPC promoted it as a month long event. MORPC is continuing to promote and coordinate these efforts around the region. Participating agencies include schools, health departments, service departments, police agencies, and parent associations, among others. The goal is to bring communities together, to build partnerships among different agencies, and to work towards a safer and more livable region. Each month, MORPC will be highlighting a school district to show off their Walk to School/Safe Routes to School efforts. The school of the month for January is Gahanna—Jefferson Public Schools. Read more about [Gahanna-Jefferson's](#) efforts to promote Walk to School. To find out more about MORPC's Walk to School program go to www.morpc.org/walktoschool

Metro Parks hit up reserves

Finances in 'good shape' after '09's \$1.8 million gap

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 2:58 AM

By Mark Ferenchik

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Franklin County Metro Parks spent \$1.8 million more than it brought in last year as officials waited for new property-tax money to start rolling in this year. At the same time, the district reduced or delayed millions in budgeted expenses to offset \$4.4 million in cuts in state funding and government grants, according to year-end figures. Reserves were able to cover the gap. Property-tax revenue was \$13.8 million, about the same as in 2008. "It's not like we're not in good shape now," said finance director Bill Ruff. Overall, the district had \$6.8 million less to spend last year than in 2008. Metro Parks cut back on land acquisition and capital improvements, including delaying the construction of a pavilion at Inniswood Gardens, Executive Director John O'Meara said.

http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/12/copy/PARKSMONEY.ART_ART_01-12-10_B2_J0G9AKK.html?adsec=politics&sid=101

2009 estimates

Metro Parks attendance up 9 percent

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 3:10 AM

A bad economy helped boost attendance at Franklin County Metro Parks last year by 9 percent, to 6.6 million visitors, officials said yesterday. "Staycations" played a role in the bump, said parks spokeswoman Peg Hanley. She suggested that social media helped, too. The parks' Facebook page has 1,396 fans who get park updates. Hanley said expanded programs for schools and senior citizens also helped. So did good weather. Of the parks, Three Creeks in southeastern Franklin County showed the biggest jump, 25 percent, from 575,200 visitors in 2008 to 719,200

last year. The biggest drop was at Chestnut Ridge in Fairfield County, where attendance dropped 23 percent from 223,800 to 172,000. The attendance numbers are estimates based on traffic counts, Hanley said.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/13/PARKATTENDANCE_ART_01-13-10_B3_JJG9KF7.html?sid=101

January 14, 2010

Granville Recreation District asks for seat at the table

BY BRIAN MILLER

Advocate Reporter

GRANVILLE TOWNSHIP --It might be the new guy on the block, but as far as recreational matters goes, the Granville Recreational District wants to take a leading role. The district's board asked the Granville Township trustees Wednesday to hold off on any decisions on funding or construction of pedestrian-bike pathways until it can complete a survey of all community recreational needs later this year. Board chairman Justin Lodge said the community might have interest in a number of potential recreational projects, not just pathways. Its survey will allow residents to identify the projects they want, rate them in order of importance and tell how much they are willing to spend on them. "It is imperative we collectively develop only those projects for which the citizens are willing to pay and in the order they are dictated by our citizens," said Lodge, reading from a letter address to the trustees and the village. The trustees agreed to the request on delaying decision-making on pathways, excluding three projects for which substantial planning has been done: a pathway linking the southwest quadrant of the township with the village, a bridge from the T.J. Evans bike path to Raccoon Valley Park and a pathway between the Granville High School and Granville Intermediate School.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100114/NEWS01/1140355/1002/Granville-Recreation-District-asks-for-seat-at-the-table>

January 17, 2010

High cost of asphalt necessitates cheaper alternatives

BY RUSS ZIMMER

CentralOhio.com

LANCASTER -- The state, counties and townships increasingly are abandoning asphalt paving programs and are turning to lesser technology amid dwindling resources and climbing costs, according to government officials. In Fairfield County, leaps in the price of materials combined with less revenue from the state are driving a new strategy: Addressing the worst spots on the worst roads instead of placing a new layer of stubbornly expensive blacktop on an asphalt street. Rural areas are taking the most dramatic steps back, with some even converting paved roads into gravel because of the cheaper maintenance and high price of asphalt.

<http://www.lancastereaglegazette.com/article/20100117/NEWS01/1170304/1002/High-cost-of-asphalt-necessitates-cheaper-alternatives>

Access to Licking County parks may hinge on levy

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 11:58 PM

By Josh Jarman

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Licking County residents could lose access to local parks next year if voters don't approve a property tax the park district expects to place on the May ballot. Licking County commissioners slashed the Licking County Park District's budget by \$300,000, or 53 percent, this year as part of a 10 percent overall reduction in county spending. Park officials say they can trim costs and have enough cash on hand to keep their 10 recreational areas open this year, but they will have to close their gates in 2011 without additional money because it will take almost all of their cash reserves to get through this year. Russell Edgington, the district's director, said residents can look forward to longer grass and fewer special events in the parks this year. He said the district will not hire as many seasonal contractors to perform maintenance and likely will allow some formerly

groomed areas to revert to the wild.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/12/access-to-licking-county-parks-may-hinge-on-levy.html

January 14, 2010

Park District in danger of closing

Director: Levy must pass in 2010 to keep county parks open

BY AMY HOLLON

Advocate Reporter

NEWARK -- The future of the Licking Park District likely depends on the willingness of local voters to support a levy. Because of cuts throughout the Licking County budget for 2010, the district received \$300,000 less from the general fund for the parks and \$30,000 less for the bike trails it maintains, more than a 50 percent cut. District Director Russ Edgington said further cuts could be on the horizon and the district's \$190,000 cash carryover will be used to plug the funding gap in 2010. He said the money simply is not enough to operate the 10 county parks and maintain the bike trails in the incorporated areas in future years. "Without a levy, Jan. 1 (2011), we will probably be forced to close our doors," Edgington said. It is not clear what then would happen to all of the county-owned land, but it is almost certain the public would no longer be able to access the parks without the district. Many of the bike trails are owned by the Thomas J. Evans Foundation, but no other sources of funding have been designated to maintain the trails.

<http://www.newarkadvocate.com/article/20100114/NEWS01/1140346/Park-District-in-danger-of-closing>

January 14, 2010

County parks director's hours cut

Parks district sees budget cut by half

By JESSICA CUFFMAN

The Marion Star

MARION - The part-time director of the county parks district will be working fewer hours unless more funding becomes available. Three parks board members voted to reduce Karen Kelley's hours from 20 per week to 12 per week, following a 50 percent cut in the department's budget. Last year, the department was appropriated \$20,000 and facing cuts this year, it was appropriated \$10,000. Board Chair Susan Bruder, a local attorney, suggested that at a meeting scheduled for Tuesday the board ask the Marion County Board of Commissioners for an additional \$6,000 for the year. That in addition to the \$10,000 and about \$3,200 in carryover would cover the expenses of the parks board for the year, which include the director's salary and some maintenance at the parks. If there was room in the budget through the end of the year, the board would consider increasing Kelley's hours again, Bruder said. Kelley is the district's lone employee. <http://www.marionstar.com/article/20100114/NEWS01/1140313/1002/County-parks-director-s-hours-cut>

Ira: Taking the financial problems with Fairfield County Parks into account with the stories above from Marion and Licking Counties it seems to me that in Central Ohio the County Parks business model is not working. A change, possibly to state law, needs to be done to preserve county level parks in Ohio.

Pataskala

City plans to expand its trail system

Saturday, January 16, 2010 5:02 PM

By GAIL MARTINEAU

ThisWeek Staff Writer

Pataskala planning and zoning director Dianne Harris wants to make the city more pedestrian-friendly. She hosted a meeting Tuesday, Jan. 12, to hear residents' ideas about an extended trail system in Pataskala. Harris is in the process of applying for a \$179,739 grant through the federal

department of transportation and plans to ask Pataskala council members to approve a resolution to move forward with the grant at the Jan. 19 meeting. The deadline for submission is Feb. 1. The grant would help create about one mile of asphalt-paved trail, which would run between the Bright Waters subdivision through Municipal Park and the Pataskala Cemetery to the Pataskala Ridge area near state Route 310. The trail would be about 3,400 feet and would hook up with the existing path near Pataskala Ridge. It would be open to walkers, runners and non-motorized vehicles, such as bikes. "The department of transportation has gotten very concerned with air quality and traffic congestion, and they perceive that if folks can get used to walking more and using bicycles more, then they can cut down on some of that air pollution," she said. The proposed trail would be approximately six feet wide, feature one bridge near Bright Waters and would have two high-visibility crossings at Creek Road and 310. According to information provided to council members, the total estimated cost of the project is \$239,652.

http://www.thisweeknews.com/live/content/lickingcounty/stories/2010/01/16/0117lscity-trail-system_in.html?sid=104

Ira: Six feet for a trail is a little bit narrow (standard is 10').

Editorial: Short takes

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 2:51 AM

COTA HAS a great idea with School Pool, a pilot program to help families in the Reynoldsburg City School District link up for carpools or shared walks or bike rides to school. It came about because budget cuts prompted the Reynoldsburg Board of Education to eliminate busing for all high-school students and any other students who live within two miles of their schools. The plan is modeled on COTA's RideSolutions program, which connects adults who want to share rides to work. If a significant number of families choose to use School Pool to find alternatives to driving their children every day, it not only could ease crowding in the parking lots but also could spark new relationships and give kids a degree of independence in getting around. If it catches on, School Pool could benefit families in all school districts. Even when schools provide buses, parents queue up in cars, typically to drop off one child from each vehicle. Encouraging ride-sharing as well as safe walking and bicycling, by helping find buddies, is healthy policy.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/editorials/stories/2010/01/12/nushortz.ART_ART_01-12-10_A8_MHG8986.html

Ira: COTA? I thought it was MORPC.

OTHER NEWS

Children should be screened, treated for obesity, panel says

Monday, January 18, 2010 3:09 AM

By Lindsey Tanner

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO -- An influential advisory panel says school-age youngsters and teens should be screened for obesity and sent to intensive behavior treatment if they need to lose weight -- a move that could transform how doctors deal with overweight children. Treating obese children can help them lose weight, the panel of doctors said in issuing new guidelines today. But that's only if it involves rigorous diet, activity and behavior counseling. Only five years ago, the same panel -- the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force -- found few benefits from pediatric obesity programs. Since then, the task force said, studies have shown success. But that has come only with treatment that is costly, hard to find and hard to follow. The good news is, "You don't have to throw your arms up and say you can't do anything," said task force chairman Dr. Ned Calonge. "This is a recommendation that says there are things that work."

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/national_world/stories/2010/01/18/obese_kids_0118.ART_ART_01-18-10_A3_BCG8D3.html

Too much TV can cancel you, study finds

Researchers find link between television watching and death from cardiovascular disease

Tuesday, January 12, 2010 2:50 AM

By Jeannine Stein

LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES -- Watching television for hour upon hour obviously isn't the best way to spend leisure time -- copious inactivity has been linked to obesity and heart disease. But now a new study quantifies TV viewing's effect on risk of death. Researchers found that each hour per day spent watching TV was linked with an 18 percent greater risk of dying of cardiovascular disease, an 11 percent greater risk of all causes of death, and a 9 percent increased risk of death from cancer. The study, released yesterday in *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*, looked at health data among 8,800 men and women ages 25 years or older who were part of the Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study. The subjects had oral glucose-tolerance tests to determine blood sugar and gave blood samples to establish cholesterol levels. People with a history of cardiovascular disease were not included in the study. In more than six years of follow-up, 87 people died of cardiovascular disease and 125 of cancer.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/national_world/stories/2010/01/12/mct_tv_heart_0112.ART_ART_01-12-10_A5_AQG9AME.html

Rooftop carriers mean higher toll on Ohio Turnpike

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 3:18 PM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CLEVELAND -- Higher tolls imposed last year on the Ohio Turnpike have an added pinch for motorists with rooftop luggage carriers or bike racks: They have been kicked into a higher toll classification. Turnpike director George Distel says the turnpike has gotten complaints and is trying to remedy the situation. The change means a motorist traveling the length of the 241-mile toll road with a rooftop bike rack would pay \$25, not the \$15 standard car rate. The 7-foot, 6-inch height designation was added when higher tolls went into effect Oct. 1. The higher rate is meant to reflect the extra weight of a tall vehicle.

http://www.dispatch.com/live/content/local_news/stories/2010/01/13/rooftop-carriers-mean-higher-toll-on-ohio-turnpike.html?sid=101

Ira: Wow! 60 pounds of bike in a rack on a Honda Civic will trash the Ohio Turnpike as surely as a triple trailer semi.

Friday January 8, 2010

Hands (and Butt) On: Sanyo's Eneloop Electric Bicycle

With a down economy and high/rising energy costs, Sanyo figures it's the perfect time to introduce electric bicycles to the U.S. market. The world's largest manufacturer of rechargeable batteries has been selling them in Japan for 15 years, and now the company has brought the Eneloop ("Energy-Looping") electric bicycle to the U.S. It was officially introduced here late last year, but many journalists got their first-up-close glimpse of the ride-assist bike at this year's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, where it was named CES's number-one green product for eco-design and sustainability. The bike looks a lot like a rugged, slightly old-fashioned bicycle. Under the wide, comfortable seat is a rechargeable battery--you remove it to recharge. Sanyo execs said the Eneloop is actually a sophisticated melding of the company's three core competencies: motors, rechargeable batteries, and electronics. Together, they give the bike torque sensitivity, the ability to charge while you're coasting and braking and to give you a significant boost as you're pedaling. The Eneloop can travel up to 46 miles on one charge at speeds of up to 15 miles an hour. The bike does not drive on its own, but as soon as you start pedaling, it assists: Soon you're traveling at 15 miles per hour, which feels faster than you might think. Stop pedaling, and the bike slows down, like an ordinary bike... Don't worry, you don't need a license. Thanks to a U.S. law passed in 2008, any vehicle that has pedals, uses less than 1,000

watts, and travels at less than 20 MPH is still considered a bike.
http://www.gearlog.com/2010/01/hands_and_butt_on_sanyos_enelo.php

Ira S Weiss
11735 Eddington
Pickerington OH 43147
iweiss@insight.rr.com