

County marching forward, meeting community's needs

Hello, fellow Adams County residents! It's hard to believe it's already 2024, isn't it? Time seems to fly by faster each year. As we kick off another year, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to work, live, and have grown up right here in Adams County. We truly live in a wonderful place, surrounded by beautiful landscapes and a strong sense of community.

I am also incredibly grateful for the opportunity provided by our local hometown paper, the *Gettysburg Times*, to share a brief county update with you all. On a side note, I urge you to continue supporting our local paper. Many towns are not fortunate to have such a valuable resource, and the *Gettysburg Times* plays a vital role in keeping our community informed and connected.

Now, let's dive into the latest news about our beloved Adams County. With a stable population of 106,027, Adams County is demonstrating resilience, reflecting a steady local economy. It's worth noting that our per capita and median family income levels surpass national averages. This stability sets us apart from many rural counties that are experiencing declines, and it's a testament to the strength of our community.

Our county commissioners play a crucial role as the governing body, overseeing various essential services and facilities that contribute to the well-being of our community. In 2024, the commissioner's budget sustains operations without imposing a tax increase, thanks to the dedicated efforts of county departments in optimizing efficiencies and managing operational costs effectively. This budget reflects our commitment to maintaining crucial programs and services that benefit all of us.

Here are some key priorities that underscore our focus:

- Upholding Public Safety

and Security: We prioritize crime prevention, emergency services, and a responsive 911 network to ensure the safety of our residents.

- Supporting Adams County residents: We continue to fund human services and veterans' programs to effectively serve our community.

- Leveraging Technology for Efficiency: We aim to streamline governmental processes through technological advancements.

- Prudent Fiscal Management: We address the county's fiscal health while maintaining bond ratings and adhering to our Fund Balance policy.

- Optimizing County Staffing: We evaluate operational priorities and provide resources for staff excellence.

Let's take a closer look at some of the exciting County Initiatives happening right here in Adams County:

- Oak Lawn Cemetery Sustainability: Significant progress has been made to ensure the sustainability of Oak Lawn Memorial Gardens, marking a positive step forward for our community.

- Ag Land Preservation: We continue to preserve farmland through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase Program, furthering our commitment to protecting our agricultural heritage.

- County Treasurer's Office: The treasurer's office takes a proactive approach in supporting taxing authorities and assuming additional responsibilities without extra resources.

- Financial Excellence: Adams County received accolades for financial reporting excellence and maintains strong accounting practices.

- 911 Funding Advocacy: We advocate for sustainable funding for the county's 911 call-taking and dispatch system to maintain emergency response capabilities.

- Election Office Relocation:

The relocation of the Elections and Voter Registration office enhances election operations, offering improved services to the community.

- Cybersecurity Measures: We prioritize cybersecurity to protect valuable data from cyber threats.

- Adams County CYS — Therapy Dogs: Children and Youth Services established a successful program with Key-stone Pet Enhanced Therapy Services.

- Tax Credit for Volunteer Emergency Responders: An ordinance establishing a real estate tax credit for active volunteers of fire and nonprofit emergency medical services organizations was passed.

- Land Preservation: Collaborations with the land conservancy and efforts to restore historic landmarks highlight our commitment to environmental sustainability and heritage preservation.

- Broadband Enhancement Efforts in Adams County: The Broadband Community Assessment survey gathers essential insights into areas needing faster and more reliable internet access.

- Reopening of Mercy House: The Mercy House reopened under new administration, providing vital services in the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) Licensed Recovery Center.

- Adams Response and Recovery (ARRF) Awards: Fourteen organizations received a total of \$5 million in ARRF funding to address various needs.

- Pennsylvania AG Discovery Center: Adams County was chosen as the preferred location for the Pennsylvania AG Discovery Center.

- Glass Recycling: Thanks to a generous grant from the Community Foundation and the dedicated leadership of local volunteers, glass recycling is



The old Adams County courthouse is located along Baltimore Street. The newer courthouse is an addition to the old one. (FILE/Gettysburg Times)

now a reality in Adams County.

Looking ahead, the county maintains an optimistic outlook for continued growth and progress. The 2024 budget aligns

with our objectives and aims to effectively address critical policy issues facing Adams County while meeting the needs of our community.

Together, let's continue to support and uplift our wonderful Adams County!

Steve Nevada is the county administrator.



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Lighting the marquee into the future

Gettysburg College’s Majestic Theater has witnessed tremendous change in its 98-year history: several transformative eras for Gettysburg and Gettysburg College, the advent of new technologies, economic booms and busts, and the growth of a thriving arts community locally.

The Majestic itself, built as a grand movie house in 1925, has evolved over the years, most recently with its grand \$16.5 million transformation into a world-class performing arts and cinema center in 2005. Founding Executive Director Jeffrey Gabel led that restoration effort and brought the world to Gettysburg for the past 20 years with a bow tie and hearty laugh. Yet, change is inevitable: Jeffrey retired at the beginning of 2024, bringing the Majestic again into a season of transition.

When Jeffrey announced his retirement, he set in motion a national search for a new leader to bring the Majestic Theater into its second century. With the assistance of arts consultants AMS Planning & Research, a Gettysburg College hiring committee fielded applications from an impressive pool of national performing arts leaders, narrowing the search to a few

finalists who will soon partake in final interviews. Our hope is to welcome a new executive director by summer. Until then, our staff is enjoying a productive performance season and looking forward to a busy 2024.

The 2023-2024 Celebrity Series kicked off in June 2023. We are pleased to report attendance is nearing levels last seen in 2019-2020 prior to the pandemic. After two seasons spent reconnecting with our audience after a 14-month closure, this season’s success is confirmation that the Majestic’s community is enduring. Daily movies have enjoyed a boost this season from major films like Barbie, Oppenheimer, Killers of the Flower Moon, and The Boys in the Boat.

The Celebrity Series continues with The Kings of Queen on March 9, and The Red Hot Chili Pipers on March 14. Rising country stars Miko Marks and Kristina Train visit May 3 with Trailblazing Women of Country, a tribute to Patsy Cline, Loretta Lynn, and Dolly Parton. We’re thrilled that Ken Burns returns April 6 for a second year as part of the Gettysburg Film Festival. On May 17-18, Gettysburg Community Theatre’s Penguin Project makes its Majestic debut with The



The Majestic Theater offers classic films as well as live performances in downtown Gettysburg. (Submitted Photo)

Sound of Music (Youth Edition). The Majestic is honored to play a part in making this special annual program shine.

Looking ahead to the 2024-2025 season, the popular annual Summer Classic Movies series will return on Wednesdays starting June 5. Tentative plans include a tour through 1980s-1990s cult favorites, an Alfred Hitchcock

classic, and a nod to Christmas in July. The full schedule will be announced in May once film rights are secured.

More live shows are lined up including a tribute to the British invasion in August, Memphis music legends in October, rising jazz superstars in February, and daring physical feats and acrobatics in May 2025. We’ll announce

the upcoming calendar of events at the beginning of summer. Patrons can expect more shows to be scheduled once a new executive director arrives, as well as annual presentations that have become beloved traditions.

The easiest way to stay up to date with this exciting time at the Majestic is by visiting the website at www.gettysburgmajestic.org. There, sign up for regular email newsletters to learn about the latest cinema and live events coming to Gettysburg. The Majestic is also on Facebook and Instagram.

We can’t wait to see you soon at the Majestic!

Jessica A. Rudy is the marketing director for Majestic Theater.

Using generative AI, risks and opportunities offered

In November 2022, artificial intelligence (AI) showed up at Gettysburg College’s and society’s collective doorstep packaged in a tidy little chat box. ChatGPT, the breakout star of a category of easily accessible AI tools designed to generate content in response to user prompts, could create any kind of text users asked for. Write a limerick about Nicolas Cage? Done. Produce an essay on Nikola Tesla? Completed within seconds. Since then, the number of generative AI tools and the kinds of things they’re capable of has seemingly increased by the day. Whether you want to conjure text, images, music, or video out of nothing, there is a generative AI tool for that.

Briefly put, these tools work basically like predictive typing on your

cell phone. What happens when you type “I hope you are” into the body of an email? Most likely, your AI-enabled email account will, quite confidently, suggest “doing well” to complete your sentence. This is a prediction that is based on patterns a generative AI tool has “learned” from analyzing huge volumes of text on the internet.

Here’s the first problem with that: Content on the internet is frequently wrong. If the content our AI tool is “trained” on is wrong, so is the prediction. The second problem is: What if I don’t know enough to actually tell whether the prediction is a good one or not? Sure, “doing well” is easy, but only because we know how to write an email. In many other cases, a generative AI tool will confidently

predict an answer that is incomplete or wrong, and if you don’t know any better, you might come away convinced that Adams County is widely known for its orange groves.

The risks and opportunities of these tools have been at the center of our work for the past year. We serve as directors of the Johnson Center for Creative Teaching and Learning and the Writing Center at Gettysburg College. With our colleagues, we have been working to sort through a tangled web, where using AI in our students’ work can either be a valuable tool by speeding things up or helping them learn, or result in (often hilariously) wrong answers. If left unchecked, it can even give students the illusion of learning.

Generally speaking, we agree that

these tools are harmful to novices who may not have yet developed enough knowledge to critically evaluate AI-generated text and recognize false or inappropriate responses. And many also agree that, in the hands of someone who has expertise in their field, judicious use of generative AI has the potential to save untold hours of labor and open up new possibilities, a prospect that is, naturally, appealing to employers. Our challenge is to ensure that our students can safely travel that path from novice to expert.

We’re pleased to report that after a year with generative AI tools at their fingertips, many Gettysburg students have developed a fairly nuanced opinion about using ChatGPT and its brethren. They don’t view them sim-

ply as “cheating tech,” and they are concerned about giving up a little bit of their privacy every time they use such a tool. In turn, our faculty have reimaged courses to make sure that students use generative AI ethically and effectively, and that the work students produce reflects their true learning.

This is, of course, an important task: a functioning democracy depends on disseminating content that is largely correct and citizens having the ability to discern truth from falsehood. Used incorrectly, generative AI tools endanger both.

Melissa Forbes is the coordinator of the Writing Center and Josef Brandauer is director of the Johnson Center for Creative Teaching and Learning at Gettysburg College.

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COLLABORATING FOR YOUTH
Doing what works in Adams County

Some of our current initiatives & programs:



Youth Coalition members are the YOUTH VOICE of Collaborating For Youth, a coalition working to reduce substance abuse and create a healthy environment for youth in Adams County. Activities are many including the annual Youth Leadership Camp a week long over-night experience.



The Center For Youth and Community Development (CFYCD) offers FREE academic afterschool programs onsite for students in grades K-12 throughout Adams County.

Pennsylvania Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program

Funded in full or in part with a federal USDE grant provided by the PA Department of Education

La Comunidad is part of the broader community coalition and is made up of leaders from the Hispanic community in Adams County. Members have a common interest in promoting prevention activities and making positive change in their communities.





STRENGTHENING Families PROGRAM
for parents and youth 10-14

SFP is an evidence-based prevention program that uses “Love and Limits” to build positive communication skills, and assists parents in setting well-rounded expectations with age-appropriate consequences while preparing our youth with the tools and confidence to achieve their goals.

Upcoming Events

BLACK BALLOON DAY
in memory of those lost to overdose

Save the Date!
Wednesday, March 6, 2024
at Gettysburg Lincoln Square
4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Free Naloxone
will be available!



MEDICINE TAKE BACK

Save the date!
Saturday, April 27, 2024
10a.m. to 2 p.m.
FREE Medication Collection Sites

Safely dispose of unused, unwanted, or expired prescriptions and OTC (over the counter) medications: loose pills, liquids, creams, and pill packs.

PROTECT our water and environment by disposing of your unwanted medications.



Collaborating for Youth is Adams County’s community-based, data-driven coalition that works to support positive youth development and substance free positive futures.

Contact us to learn more about programming, volunteer, and employment opportunities!



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Adams Economic Alliance success, in statistics and souls

Measuring progress often means statistics. And don't get me wrong, I love statistics as much as any economic development professional. But progress also means touching and impacting real lives, the very souls of our Adams County residents. And dare I say, economic development's got soul, as well.

As I recount our organization's progress in 2023, into 2024, I'll be relaying a number of statistics that demonstrate the value we've added to Adams County's quality of life. But I also challenge you to see beyond the numbers and process how these numbers and facts are also impacting Adams County's residents, the very soul of our community.

Alliance Vice President Kaycee Kemper reports that the alliance facilitated a total of \$2.4 million in low-interest state and federal financing for six Adams County businesses in 2023. Another \$2 million in low-interest state funding for two additional businesses will close in the coming months. Because of these

eight loans, a total of 168 jobs are being retained and 14 new jobs are being created. These loans represent Adams County's wide variety in industries: agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and services in the form of a daycare.

The alliance also facilitated a \$2.7 million RACP grant for the construction of the Adams County Historical Society and its Gettysburg Beyond the Battle Museum.

Brady Rodgers, the alliance's director of Business and Community Outreach, continues to work closely with the Adams County Broadband Taskforce to complete a broadband study. Working hand-in-hand with county staff, a needs assessment has been completed. Moving forward, efforts are focusing on obtaining funding to deploy fiber in the county's most critical areas.

The alliance is beginning a new chapter in its 30-plus year history by launching a new loan program designed for homebuyers. The Adams County Home-

buyer Assistance Program is currently welcoming its first applicants. This revolving loan program came about thanks to our partnership with the @Home in Adams County initiative, spurred by Adams County's lack of workforce housing.

Additionally, the alliance launched the Spark Loan Program, a new revolving fund for Adams County's small businesses. Eligible uses of funds include working capital, soft costs, inventory and equipment purchase and real estate improvements.

Success and progress are also measured through a number of partnerships and properties.

We continue to work closely with Oxford Township, as they welcome a developer and new businesses to the Berlin Junction Manufacturing Center, formerly known as the home of Alwine Brothers and then Glen-Gery Bricks. Production at the 92-acre tract ceased in 1993, and all sales and activity ceased in 1999. To quote Commissioner Chair Ran-

dy Phiel, "The site languished for twenty plus years." Today, the once-blighted site is coming back to life, thanks to a number of partnerships, an alliance-facilitated grant and LERTA tax relief program.

Similarly, the alliance acquired a 50-acre property formerly known as CM Metals, DBA the Gettysburg Foundry. Our organization continues to forge partnerships to redevelop this blighted property and bring it back into productive re-use. The county has designated a large area, including the former foundry site, in evaluating locations for construction of a new wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to increase capacity and to support planned economic development projects.

Located in close proximity to Gettysburg National Park, the foundry site is strategically located between the Eisenhower Inn, All-Star Sports Complex and Marsh Creek, an area identified for targeted economic growth. A brownfield reuse plan for this

site would support the county's evaluation for a new WWTP and would identify the need for any further environmental assessment of the site.

The alliance also continues to partner with the Adams County Technical Institute (ACTI), in their search for a suitable site to build a larger facility. This would expand career and technical education in Adams County, impacting, and planning for, Adams County's future workforce.

OK, now let's be honest, how many of these projects encompass your definition of "economic development?" It's OK, there's no judgement here!

As a field, economic development continues to grow and encompass much more than traditional development and redevelopment. As outlined here, much of our work and success focuses on partnerships, relationships, businesses along with homes, business leaders aside homebuyers, properties as well as programs, infrastructure that speaks to industry and our inter-

connectedness. It all touches our quality of life.

For many years, the economic development field focused almost exclusively on building and business. And while much of our work still certainly encompasses business and economic growth, we (as a profession) no longer have blinders on, blocking our vision of the peripheral yet vital ways business intersects with the workforce, housing and homes, workers as well as residents.

Much of our continued work in 2024 will focus on businesses and properties, funding and infrastructure, but the alliance will also be supporting the Adams County workforce and helping families achieve home ownership. And as we touch projects that in turn touch residents' lives, homes and quality of life, that is where success resonates deeper than ever before, down to the very soul and souls of Adams County.

Robin Fitzpatrick is president of the Adams Economic Alliance.

Issues in crucial election year

Americans will determine the course of our country not only for the next four years, but well beyond. Adams County Democratic Committee stands with President Joseph Biden, Gov. Josh Shapiro and Senators Bob Casey and John Fetterman in their efforts to make our country and our commonwealth a better place to live, work, and play.

President Biden's Build Back Better Framework supplied funding for roads and bridges, healthcare, and education, with the goal of strengthening the middle class and creating a pathway to success for all. Our strengths in Adams County mirror those of the state and country.

President Biden's American Rescue Plan funds have been disbursed to our county and municipalities, allowing local governments to complete much needed roadwork, sewer and water improvements.

We support efforts to expand and improve internet access to the entire county through economical broadband service, currently spearheaded by Democratic Adams County Commissioner Marty Qually.

The president's plan has been working across the aisle to improve the lives of Americans and Adams Counties. We have seen:

- decreased prescription drug prices, such as insulin
- more people with insurance to cover medical expenses and keep us healthy
- a booming tourist economy and hospitality sector—the buses are back in Adams County
- inflation decreased from 9% to 3.4% and still decreasing
- gas down from \$5/gallon to \$3.25/gallon here
- wage gains exceeding inflation (4% wage gains vs. 3% inflation)
- mortgage rates down and likely to continue to decrease
- stock market and housing prices hit record

highs

- unemployment dropped from 6.4% when Biden took office to 3.7% currently, 14 million jobs added, and recent US Labor statistics show Gettysburg with the lowest unemployment rate in the Commonwealth

- Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at 3.1% vs 2% when Biden's term began, with the feared recession never materializing and Bidenomics giving us an economic soft landing that is the envy of the developed world

There are still vital needs to be met:

- thoughtful immigration reform, common sense methods to keep our orchards and farms staffed and thriving, allowing those who come to our county seasonally or to stay to do so, safely and legally

- continued strong support and military aid for the Ukrainian people who are preventing their country from takeover by a would-be expansionist dictator so that our soldiers don't have to fight a wider war

- peace or at least cessation of hostilities in Gaza and Israel, with concern for every civilian, no matter which side

- support for small businesses in the struggles they face, vital to our success as a county
- increased funding for free public education to continue Pennsylvania's standing as the first state to provide that needed service to our children
- protection of personal liberties and voting rights

Grave concerns include those who still deny the results of the fair and honest 2020 election and who would seek to prevent every voter from exercising their right to a fair and honest 2024 election and to deny the personal choices that everyone is entitled to expect in our United States.

Marcia Wilson is chair of the Adams County Democratic Committee.

Adams First, stronger together

The Adams County Republican Committee (ACRC) is the grass-roots organizing infrastructure for Republicans throughout Adams County, carved out into 17 regions, serving all 51 voting precincts. As we approach the upcoming elections, the ACRC acknowledges both the challenges that lie ahead and the successes that have paved the way for our continued growth.

Last year's election results stand as a testament to the strength of our message, the dedication of our volunteers, and the support of Adams County Republicans. The success of the ACRC in recent elections is evident in the victories achieved at various levels. Having six school districts in Adams County, 29 of the 30 Republican school board director candidates on the ballot won their elections.

With more than 60 Republican candidates on the ballot running for municipal positions in 34 municipalities throughout Adams County, the loss was three, and all county row candidates secured wins.

The ACRC's Adams First approach has demonstrated an ability to connect with voters and secure their trust. These wins underscore the resonance of our values, emphasizing fiscal responsibility, individual liberties, and a commitment

to Adams County.

A noteworthy aspect of our recent successes has been the impressive voter turnout that has rallied behind Republican candidates. This surge in voter participation is a testament to the effectiveness of our outreach efforts and the genuine connection we have established with a diverse range of voters.

The ACRC has successfully engaged citizens from all walks of life, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose for Adams County. Critical to our achievements has been the remarkable dedication and teamwork exhibited by our volunteers.

From grassroots activists to campaign strategists, the commitment of our volunteers has been instrumental in spreading our message and mobilizing voters. Their tireless efforts in organizing events, canvassing neighborhoods, and connecting with voters on social media platforms have been pivotal in securing electoral victories.

Looking ahead, the ACRC recognizes the challenges that must be navigated to ensure continued success in the upcoming elections.

One key initiative to address these challenges is the Adams First Conservative Forum, a platform open to all Repub-

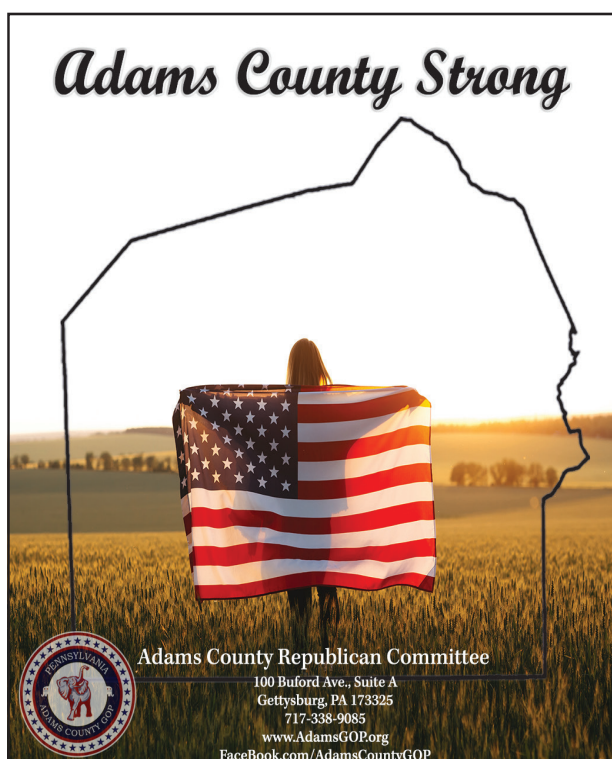
licans, designed to facilitate constructive dialogue and collaboration among conservatives. This forum provides an opportunity for Republicans to engage in thoughtful discussions about the party's direction, policy priorities, and effective strategies for the upcoming elections.

By fostering open communication and unity within the party, the Adams First Conservative Forum aims to strengthen the Republican resolve in the face of challenges. As we prepare for the 2024 election, the ACRC remains committed to building on our successes. By learning from our achievements, addressing challenges head-on, and leveraging the energy of our dedicated volunteers, we are poised to continue making a positive impact on the political landscape.

The Adams First approach serves as a testament to our commitment to collaboration and innovation as we strive to secure victories that reflect the values and aspirations of voters in Adams County. We Are Stronger Together!

Join us, and let's win the 2024 election, www.adams-gop.org.

Charlotte Schaffer is chair of the Adams County Republican Committee.



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Housing market and interest rates forecast for 2024

What will happen with home prices this year?

As more and more media headlines create confusion about the housing market and our economy, this question is probably top-of-mind for many people right now.

While I can't fully forecast the future, I will always do my best to provide a well-rounded opinion based on data, insights, and expert quotes.

The past year saw its fair share of twists and turns as the housing market shifted. When we see changes in housing like this, it can seem impossible to keep up with it, but here is what I can tell anyone who asks the questions.

It is still a seller's market. And why?

Yes, and the reason for that is prices are driven by

supply and demand, and we still have a low inventory of homes on the market. This means continued pressure on home prices. According to the "Home Price Expectation Survey" conducted by Fannie Mae, which includes projections from over one hundred economists, real estate experts, and investment and market strategists, home prices are expected to see small but steady increases every year through 2028. And while the percentage of appreciation may not be as high as it was in recent years, what's important to focus on is that this survey says we'll see prices rise, not fall, for at least the next five years with 2024 looking at about a 2.6% increase. So, if you have been worried that home prices are going to fall,

this is a big takeaway. As you know, prices vary by local area, experts are projecting that they'll continue to rise across the county for years to come at a pace that's more normal for the market.

So, what does this mean to buyers and sellers?

For sellers, pricing your home appropriately so you can catch the eyes of serious buyers is important, especially in this mortgage rate environment.

For buyers, with supply still being limited, you will need to be flexible and willing to meet sellers halfway.

Wondering what is happening with Interest Rates?

Information provided by Movement Mortgage, Andrew Harkins, Central PA sales manager, yorkpamotgage.com.

In reading a report from the

National Association of Realtors (NAR) published Friday, Feb. 10, 2024, confirmed a speculation many economists predicted. As rates have crept down, the prices of single-family homes have maintained an upward trajectory. In Q4 2023, prices of single-family homes rose in more than 85% of the markets tracked by the National Association of Realtors; 34 of those markets even saw double-digit price gains. The national median price for an existing single-family home sits at \$391,700, a 3.5% increase from one year ago. Limited housing inventory remains the cause for this trend. New construction activity will be a key factor in increasing the number of available homes. However, builders are facing challenges with material and labor costs.

The next National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Housing Market Index report in February will provide insight into builders' prediction for the number of future single-family home sales.

In December, Fed officials indicated that they envisioned three rate cuts in 2024, reducing their benchmark rate to about 4.6% by year's end. Powell told "60 Minutes" that that forecast likely still reflected policymakers' views. (As noted in an Associated Press article, published on Feb. 4. You can find that article at www.APNews.com.)

It is important to note, if mortgage rates drop, this will increase affordability across the board and may lead to an influx of new homebuyers entering the market. Simply put, this

increased demand could outpace supply and continue to place upward pressure on home prices. Key economic indicators like the upcoming January inflation report on Feb. 13, and the Fed's meeting minutes on Feb. 22, could impact mortgage rates and buyer sentiment.

Our market outlook: Based on the Fed commentary it is very likely that rates will come down over the next 12 months, with that we expect to see spiked buyer demand which will likely drive home prices up even further. Adams county has seen a 96,100 increase in the median sales price from January 2019, 173,900, to January 2024, 270,000.

Petula Millhimes Yingling is an agent with Keller Williams Keystone Realty.

Building for the future of the local community

Adams Electric always has a plan. As a not-for-profit electric utility, we've learned to run lean. With just 76 employees, we wear many hats and balance many responsibilities. Multitasking and cross-training keep us at our best. This is especially true with planning and budgeting.

Our 2023 capital budget was \$13.2 million. With a new capital budget of \$13.5 million, mostly for construction, it stands to reason why we are theming 2024 a year of "Building for the Future." This all leads to growth and better service reliability. While that capital budget may look like a larger number, rest assured the cooperative is in sound financial condition.

Most of the prep work started in 2023 as we developed our long-range work plan. I'm sure you've heard the word "infrastructure" a lot over the last few years. Well, we're no different. The ability to keep power flowing relies on a stronger, more resilient infrastructure.



Adams Electric Cooperative is a nonprofit electric company. (FILE—Gettysburg Times)

One major accomplishment in 2023 was fully energizing a new metering point in Parkville, York County in October. The new metering point is our first since 2017, and it increases our electrical capacity in that area from 7 to 10 megawatts of power – creating better reliability for our members and a safer work area for our employees.

Last year, we also completed the installation of three-phase underground electric cable throughout the Amblebrook development in Gettysburg, Adams County. This 55-plus subdivision, expected to add over 1,400 new accounts to the co-op's service area, sits between our Gettysburg and Lake Heritage metering points, and transi-

tioning all our overhead facilities to underground in that area was a major undertaking. Another notable project completed was rebuilding the express feed circuit from parts of Fairfield and Carroll Valley to Ski Liberty, one of our largest accounts.

In our Shippensburg District, we revamped our McCrea Substation, including replacing several poles, oil circuit reclosers, automated switches and underground cable. We also tied together our feeders near Blossville, Cumberland County, to allow for remote switching, and replaced a 50-year-old service feeding another one of our key accounts, Beistle Company.

We also changed out numerous poles and crossarms

on the dual circuit going south out of our Rinely Substation in Southern York County. This was a result of the major storm in that area in August 2023.

In "Building for the Future," we plan this year to replace 15 aged utility poles on a transmission line near Fairfield, Adams County, with ductile iron poles, and about 50 poles near Newville, Cumberland County, between our McCrea and Blossville substations. We are also going to start a rehab project at our Abbottstown, Adams County, metering point, add a new feeder near Lake Heritage, Adams County, and upgrade service near Brodbeck's, York County. We'll also start preliminary preparations for a

new Cleversburg Substation, in Cumberland County, to take form in 2025-2026.

Beyond construction, we continue our five-year plan to replace every meter in our distribution system. Each meter has a remote disconnect switch installed. So far, 10,700 meters have been changed-out with the new style. Another 6,000 meters are scheduled for 2024, with completion expected in 2026.

We also know we can't just focus outside when we plan for upgrades. While the poles and wires are what everyone sees, there's so much behind the scenes with technology that we need to ensure remains functioning at a high level. We've taken steps in 2023 to increase our cyber

and technical security including replacing our main UPS, changing our multifactor authentication provider, and upgrading our switch infrastructure. In 2024, we will also be replacing our current phone system and updating our disaster recovery system.

Investing in our physical system is important to continue to provide the stable reliability our membership has come to expect, and we as outline in our mission statement. Another priority in that statement is, "improving the quality of life in the communities we serve." One way we accomplish this is by investing in our communities.

Over the last year, the co-op made direct donations to over 60 local organizations, includ-

ing funds to purchase several AED units and donating poles and light fixtures. Our employees serve as volunteers on many community organization boards, and we continue to encourage helping those in the areas we serve.

Adams Electric founding members had a plan for the future of the cooperative, and it's something Adams Electric has continued to build upon for nearly 85 years. As you drive down the road and see our poles and wires, or see our co-op faces in the community, just know, our plans include you and our local communities.

Steve Rasmussen is the chief executive officer and general manager for Adams Electric Cooperative.

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ADAMS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC COMMITTEE

Successful year for tourism in Gettysburg, Adams County

As 2023 rolls into 2024, it's a great time to reflect on another successful year for tourism in Adams County and look ahead to the promise of tomorrow.

The tourism professionals at Destination Gettysburg along with our many business partners successfully attract high levels of visitation through engaging promotional campaigns and by offering visitors attractive combinations of geographic accessibility, desirable amenities, and good value compared to our competitors. In addition to continuing to successfully rebound from COVID, Adams County has attracted high levels of visitation despite challenges posed by economic uncertainty, inflation, and high gas prices over the last several years.

Last year, 2023, saw many significant events and milestones take place in Gettysburg. The year kicked

off with the filming of "A Gettysburg Christmas," an independent movie filmed entirely in Adams County, featuring scenes shot at favorite local restaurants and shops, and including hundreds of residents as extras. In October, we celebrated the 30th anniversary of another movie, with a film festival commemorating the making of the epic movie Gettysburg, which helped put our town back on the map for the American public in 1993.

The Adams County Historical Society opened a new major historic attraction, showcasing the overall history of Adams County at the Gettysburg: Beyond the Battle Museum. And the 160th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg drew extra-large crowds to participate in dozens of events spread over twelve days in late June and early July.

It was also a year of accom-

plades for Gettysburg. In its ranking of the Top Ten New Museums in the U.S., the USA Today's Reader's Choice Awards ranked the Gettysburg: Beyond the Battle Museum at #1, and the WWII: American Experience Museum at #5 on its top 10 list. In addition, Gettysburg was named the #1 Most Welcoming City/Town in the U.S. by Booking.com, one of the world's largest travel websites. The award was based on more than 240 million traveler reviews.

The staff of Destination Gettysburg worked hard in 2023 creating new opportunities for people to visit and spreading the word about the exciting and interesting things happening here. With several tourism partners, our team created and held the first inaugural Gettysburg Girl Scout Day, attracting 120 scouts and their family members to enjoy a variety

of experiences around Adams County. Destination Gettysburg also launched a podcast that currently features twelve episodes highlighting attractions and events throughout the region.

All this visitor activity has a very positive economic impact on the people who live in Gettysburg and Adams County. In 2023, more than \$68 million was spent by our visitors on lodging, generating nearly \$3.2 million in lodging tax revenue – more than \$800,000 of which is allocated to the county and municipalities with both lodging properties and local police departments. These numbers are records for Adams County lodging performance, confirming the strength of our tourism recovery.

This year, 2024, promises to bring additional exciting experiences for our visitors and residents. Among them

are plans for the Gettysburg Scenic Railroad, a sightseeing train offering rides from downtown Gettysburg through the first day's battlefield and into the beautiful countryside. The estimated opening of this new attraction is fall 2024. Destination Gettysburg is also working closely with community stakeholders to develop a Black History Trail, commemorating the historical experiences and contributions of black Americans in Adams County. In addition, we are promoting our region's beautiful apple blossoms through the new Adams County Blossom Belt, a guide to a dozen spots to view apple blossoms and enjoy country markets and dining.

Looking ahead, economists predict the economy will continue to slow in 2024, and the rate of travel growth will return to historic averages across the nation. We already

saw that in 2023, as hotel occupancy in Adams County grew 2% for the year, well below the robust double-digit growth experienced coming out of COVID in 2021-2022. While industry analysts predict 2024 will bring a leveling-out of travel demand, travel remains a high priority for Americans going forward.

The positive experiences provided to our visitors by Gettysburg's hotels, restaurants, businesses, and attractions consistently meet and exceed the expectations of our many return visitors and provide a positive impression to first-time guests. Destination Gettysburg and the tourism professionals in Adams County are more focused than ever on providing experiences that will bring visitors back to Gettysburg again and again.

Karl Pietrzak is the president and chief executive officer of Destination Gettysburg.

2024 set to be an important year in local history

As executive director of the Adams County Historical Society (ACHS), I have a lot to be thankful for in 2024. When I began serving in this role nearly five years ago, ACHS was struggling to make ends meet. Our headquarters, located inside a badly deteriorating Victorian home on the campus of the Lutheran seminary, was inadequate for our needs and posed an enormous safety risk to the millions of historic items we have been entrusted.

A successful \$12 million capital campaign has put all of that behind us, thanks in large part to you, the resi-

dents of Adams County, who rallied around this cause and allowed us to achieve a goal that few imagined possible. Our new 29,000-square-foot history center complex is fully funded, and our museum was recently voted "Best in the Nation" by USA Today readers.

Over the past year, we've welcomed nearly 40,000 visitors from all 50 states. We've hosted events with notable public figures like Ken Burns, Jeff Shaara, Susan Eisenhower, Harold Holzer, Stephen Lang, and Tom Berenger (plus many others from the cast from the movie Gettysburg).

And best of all, our remarkable collection is now safe and sound with the proper security and climate control that it never had before. The stories of our ancestors, and of us, will live on here for generations.

For me, the most exciting part of our new home has been its impact on the young people in our community. We've hosted students from every school district in Adams County, free of charge, so that they can gain an understanding of what makes this place, their home, so amazing. I've noticed their reactions as they discover an ancestor's name etched onto the walls inside our museum. I've seen their faces light up with excitement when handed a battlefield relic or arrowhead to examine. And inside our museum, the immersive exhibit "Caught in the Crossfire" has been a major attraction for students, but also for visitors of every age. Inside this room, we give folks an idea of what life was like for Adams County residents when their homes and farms were enveloped by the



Adams County Historical Society is located north of Gettysburg along the Biglerville Road. (FILE—Gettysburg Times)

with several very special guests and longtime collaborators who are central to his nearly 40 years of award-winning filmmaking. I think I'm most proud of the coalition we've put together to make this happen. The festival is a collaborative effort that includes ACHS, Gettysburg College, the Gettysburg Foundation, the American Battlefield Trust, The Better Angels Society, and several media partners including Maryland

Public Television and WITF. I'm hoping that the success of this festival will prove that strong nonprofit collaboration in Gettysburg is both achievable and beneficial for all.

I hope you will consider visiting our new history center in 2024 if you haven't already. Adams County residents receive a discount and I think you'll be pleasantly surprised by the quality of our exhibits and events. We also offer memberships starting at \$40 per year that include unlimited free admission to the museum and many of our programs. We could not exist without the support of more than 2,000 members, so thank you to those who have been so generous in supporting our work!

We try hard to make an impact in our community and the ACHS staff cares deeply about your experience here. After all, this is YOUR museum. So please don't hesitate to stop by or write to me about how ACHS has been, or can be, helpful to you and your family. Your stories matter to us.

I hope that 2024 brings you joy and fulfillment, and that you make some time to appreciate the remarkable place that we all are so fortunate to live in.

Andrew Dalton is the executive director of the Adams County Historical Society, Gettysburg Beyond the Battle Museum.

PROUD TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY!



RANDY PHIEL

ADAMS COUNTY COMMISSIONER

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Upper Adams Food Pantry

99 N. Main St. Biglerville, PA 17307

717-677-6951

**Thank You
For Your Support**



South Central Community Action Programs

Progress Report

SCCAP is a local nonprofit with the mission to empower, engage, and cultivate community action to create innovative and effective solutions to end poverty.

How we made a difference together in 2023 through SCCAP:



✓ 38 affordable housing units were developed by our partners

community meetings and joined in coalition meetings with an average of 40 attendees

✓ Held a housing planning meeting with 29 attendees



✓ Assisted 2,135 individuals with child care costs so families could work

✓ Served 638 households



✓ Started a new Circles group

✓ Prevented

eviction and provided case management for 666 households impacting 1,617 individuals



✓ Adams County pantries served 6,260 individuals

✓ Franklin County pantries served 5,927 individuals



✓ Distributed over 70 care packs

✓ Helped 14 people out of jail and into safe housing; 11 successfully stayed out of jail

✓ Grew the Moving Forward Support Group to 4 locations with 4 groups meeting weekly

✓ Served 15 people through Gears for Careers



✓ Distributed 1.2 million pounds of produce

✓ Served 13,000 people through 50 community partners



✓ Sheltered 44 households, 103 people
✓ 11 households increased their savings; 3 used their savings to buy a car

✓ Assisted 25 adults in finding employment and 5 in increasing employment hours

✓ 83% of those who exited have obtained safe, affordable housing



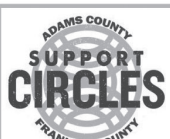
✓ Sheltered 33 households, 54 people
✓ 17 households increased their savings; 2 used their savings to buy a car

✓ Assisted 11 adults in finding employment and 11 in increasing employment hours

✓ 75% of those who exited have obtained safe, affordable housing



✓ Served more than 6,000 moms, infants and children through age 5



✓ Started new classes for the first time since COVID began

✓ 10 families currently enrolled

✓ A past Circle Leader purchased a home and another received her PhD



✓ 277 furnace repairs during cold season

✓ 347 houses weatherized impacting 774 individuals (thru September 30, 2023)

We see more and more people in need each week. Together, we can meet the rising demand.



Progress report

FROM CROSS KEYS VILLAGE



Cross Keys Village is one of the largest employers in Adams County. Demographics indicate that the need for talented individuals in the Senior Living field will keep growing in the coming years. Join a team that makes a difference in people’s lives.

Outstanding wellness, dining, art education and performing spaces offer our villagers unparalleled opportunities to expand their horizon, cultivate existing and newly found passions, and enjoy **authentic community spirit** between neighbors.



From our vaunted Chicken BBQ and Car Show to concerts offered at no cost and our evergreen Train Room Open Houses, **opportunities abound** for area families to enjoy a moment of fellowship with Cross Keys Village’s residents and team.

Cross Keys Village is planning a new Senior Living environment, **Bridgewater Landing**, designed to make relaxed and unpretentious “lakeside living” a reality year-round. Bridgewater Landing will feature generously spaced single-family and duplex homes.



Cross Keys Village offers **information and support groups** at no cost to neighbors and groups from the greater community in need of caregiving tools, grief counseling, or education about memory support and coping with Parkinson’s disease symptoms.



CROSS KEYS VILLAGE
The Brethren Home Community

2990 Carlisle Pike, New Oxford, PA 17350
717-624-5350



Gettysburg National Military Park Museum & Visitor Center

exploreGETTYSBURG

Begin at the Museum & Visitor Center to immerse yourself in all Gettysburg has to offer. Step into history through our exclusive experiences, tours, events and historic sites.



Film | Cyclorama | Museum | Special Exhibit | Licensed Battlefield Guided Tours | NPS Ranger Programs | Gettysburg National Military Park | Eisenhower National Historic Site | David Wills House | Gettysburg National Cemetery | Special Events | Historic Sites & Experiences

Obtain park information and enjoy on-site shopping and dining at the Museum & Visitor Center.

Proceeds from tickets and other purchases in the Museum & Visitor Center benefit Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site.



For tickets, Friends of Gettysburg memberships and current hours, call 717-334-2436 or visit GettysburgFoundation.org.



GETTYSBURG
FOUNDATION

National Park Service and Gettysburg Foundation partnership...

We Are Stronger Together!

The National Park Service and the Gettysburg Foundation partner to enhance the preservation and understanding of the heritage and lasting significance of Gettysburg through the Foundation’s public outreach and private financial and in-kind support of Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site.

Little Round Top Rehabilitation

The Gettysburg Foundation raised and provided \$3.8 million towards Gettysburg National Military Park’s rehabilitation of Little Round Top—soon to be completed. Area residents and visitors can explore and learn about this significant area of the battlefield in a safe, accessible and immersive way when it reopens late Spring or early Summer 2024.



Eisenhower National Historic Site

Join us for **An Eisenhower Easter Egg Roll** at the historic site Saturday, March 30, 2024, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Kids can enjoy story time with their family and participate in activities related to the historic White House Easter egg roll. Earn and decorate a wooden Easter egg to roll on the Eisenhower lawn. Free and open to the public, this special event is co-sponsored by the Dwight D. Eisenhower Society, Adams County Library System, Destination Gettysburg and the Gettysburg Foundation in partnership with the National Park Service. (RAIN DATE, APRIL 1)



Special Education at the Museum & Visitor Center

Gettysburg National Military Park and the Gettysburg Foundation brought back **Sensory Friendly Hours** in early 2024. Visitors with visual and auditory sensitivities enjoyed special activities and programming in the Cyclorama and Museum for a quiet and calm experience.



Families visited the Gettysburg Museum of the American Civil War in February 2024 for the first **English Language Learners** event, with translated museum activities, highlights and tours.

The National Park Service and Gettysburg Foundation look forward to presenting special education events such as these for years to come.

Friends of Gettysburg

The Friends of Gettysburg are the heart and soul of the Gettysburg Foundation, volunteering and fundraising to help the Foundation and the National Park Service maintain the mission of preservation and education of this special place. Our Friends have volunteered more than 60,000 hours utilizing their skills, talents and time in support of this mission. Join the Friends today.



nps.gov/gett nps.gov/eise

GettysburgFoundation.org

GETTYSBURG
FOUNDATION

Empowering Businesses Through Collaboration



The Advantage Adams collaborative partnership is comprised of the Adams Economic Alliance, County of Adams, Destination Gettysburg, The Chamber of Gettysburg and Adams County, and HACC – Gettysburg. Our partnership focus is to help nurture business growth and development in Adams County. Advantage Adams’ mission is to help you reap the benefits of all Adams County has to offer. Some of these opportunities include workforce development, training and education, navigating legislative processes, and growing the community as a whole.



For more information, visit
AdvantageAdams.com

A D V A N T A G E
Adams